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WEDNESDAY MARCH 12 1997



Anthony Loyd reports
from lawless
southern Albania
PAGE 12

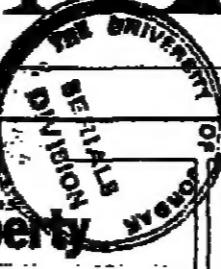


SUPPLEMENT

People & property



16-PAGE SPECIAL



STATE OR
PRIVATE?
Nigella Lawson
on choosing
a primary
school
PAGE 15



Inspectors sacked for breaking rules

Tighter rules promised for meat hygiene

By PHILIP WEBSTER AND POLLY NEWTON

THE Government promised tougher action against rogue abattoirs and meat inspectors last night amid allegations that ministers had been warned several times about a "potential timebomb" of declining hygiene standards.

Forty-five Meat Hygiene Service (MHS) employees have been disciplined, with three being dismissed, for failing to follow rules aimed at minimising the risk of "mad cow" disease.

And Angela Browning, the Food Minister, intends to publish "league tables" of hygiene standards in the country's 450 abattoirs. She also said that she would back prosecution of slaughterhouse owners who intimidated inspectors — there had been cases, she said, where police help had been needed so that inspectors could do their job.

The promises of action came after Labour leaked a series of letters from Peter Comrie, general secretary of the Association of Meat Inspectors, to Mrs Browning and to the MHS complaining about abattoir practices. One, written in January and referring to discussions last July, told the hygiene service that standards were steadily decreasing, adding: "This is a potential timebomb."

Then last month Mr Comrie

wrote to Mrs Browning saying: "Our levels of enforcement in abattoirs at present leave much to be desired. We repeat our concern, particularly, with the faecal contamination of carcasses and offal, and would urge you to take immediate action to alleviate this."

In another letter to the MHS last week, he claimed that inspectors were being actively encouraged by the hygiene service to ignore breaches of regulations, and were in some cases threatened if they tried to take action.

Mrs Browning said last night that she assumed Mr Comrie meant that the inspectors were threatened by abattoir owners, but he said his was referring to the hygiene service.

The disclosure of the letters came in the wake of last week's furor about an unpublished report linking slaughterhouse conditions to the spread of the *E. coli* bacterium. The Government said then that ministers had not seen the report, although most of the concerns raised in it had been addressed.

But in the Commons yesterday, Tony Blair said: "Contrary to what we were told last week, serious concern about contamination was being expressed to ministers as well as others over a period of nine

months, and, secondly, the situation in abattoirs on contamination is getting worse not better." He urged the Prime Minister to institute immediate inquiries into the "serious allegations".

John Major promised to investigate evidence that the AMI had issued several warnings about contaminated meat. He expressed surprise, however, at the AMI's warning that enforcement levels left much to be desired "because it is the AMI themselves who are responsible for the enforcement of hygiene rules".

He also suggested that the vice-president of the AMI, Mac Johnston, had stated his total backing of the hygiene service and its efforts to raise standards.

Mr Johnston told *The Times* that he had no evidence to support Mr Comrie's allegations. "His letters are written on AMI headed notepaper, but as far as I know, they are his views, not those of the committee." There are many people in many professions that, when life moves on, they kick and scream and refuse to move on, and find any opportunity to whine and whinge."

Mrs Browning said: "I am a little surprised that Mr Comrie, as general secretary acting as a trade unionist for

Continued on page 2, col 4

MPs launch attack on Eurosceptics

By JAMES LANDALE AND ARTHUR LEATHLEY

ALMOST 100 pro-European MPs, including 17 former Tory ministers, launch a fresh assault on their Eurosceptic opponents today with a defense of Britain's membership of the European Union.

In an advertisement in *The Times*, they emphasise the importance of Britain remaining a "full and committed" member of the EU and tell anti-Europeans that to contemplate withdrawal is to "contemplate disaster".

The move comes after yesterday's warning by 23 senior industrialists of the damage

caused by Euroscepticism. The advertisement, signed by 39 Tories, 40 Labour MPs, 17 Liberal Democrats and one Scottish Nationalist — the party leader, Alex Salmond, the 97-strong group includes three former Cabinet Ministers, including Douglas Hurd, the former Foreign Secretary and David Hunt, the former Public Service Minister, and Roy Hattersley, the former Labour Prices and Consumer Protection Minister. The advert is the latest stage of the Europe '97 campaign by the European Movement.

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Advertisement, page 7
Peter Riddell, page 8

Rioting miners rebuffed by Kohl

German riot police with batons beat off coal miners as they broke through cordons and tried to storm the Bonn offices of Chancellor Kohl.

More than 20,000 miners protesting against government plans to cut coal subsidies have been laying siege to the city since Monday. Herr Kohl refused to meet a delegation led by the coal union chief.

Page 14

Seven fishermen drowned at sea

Seven fishermen were feared drowned in separate accidents. The wreck of the trawler *Westhaven*, with four men from Arbroath, Angus, was found on the seabed a hundred miles off Aberdeen.

Three Cornishmen from St Ives were on board the *Gorah Lass*, which was found in 300ft of water off Portreath. Two of their bodies were recovered.

Page 3

The Times on the Internet
<http://www.the-times.co.uk>

A photograph of Comet Hale-Bopp taken yesterday at Binfield, Berkshire

Tail of the century

By NIGEL HAWKES, SCIENCE EDITOR

COMET Hale-Bopp is providing a brilliant show as one of the best comets of the twentieth century, clearly visible round the world in the morning and evening skies.

Terry Platt, an amateur astronomer from Binfield near Bracknell in Berkshire, took this photograph of the comet at 4am yesterday from his garden. He says that it is easily visible with the naked eye, and comparable in brightness with the brightest stars.

He used a telephoto lens, picking his moment between wisps of early-morning fog. Amateur astronomers are a hardy bunch: he had been up at 4am observing Mars, then managed to get three hours' sleep before rising again to photograph Hale-Bopp.

It is not necessary to head for the hills to observe the comet. One American astronomer, Paul Feldman, of Johns Hopkins University, assures would-be watchers that he had no difficulty seeing the comet from a well-lit supermarket car park, even after sunrise.



"Of course you'd never see something like this under a Labour government"

Astronomers both amateur and professional will spend much of the next two months watching the comet, named after the two American astronomers who first identified it in 1995. It is expected to go on getting brighter for a further two weeks as it gets closer to the Sun. Hale-Bopp is already brighter than Comet Hyakutake, which crossed the sky a year ago, according to the magazine *Sky & Telescope*.

This comet's tail takes up 20 degrees of the sky, about twice the size of a human fist held at arm's length and viewed against the heavens.

Nasa, the space agency, is using Hale-Bopp's passage to put to the test a theory about the origins of the Earth's oceans. It will be launching sounding rockets that will rise above the atmosphere to measure the composition of cloud around the comet. The theory is that water on the Earth came from comets that hit the Earth's surface fairly early in its history. Comets consist largely of ice.

The rocket observations of the amounts of trace elements in the comet will be compared with the amounts of the same elements in the oceans. If they are the same, it will provide support for the theory.

Where to watch, page 5

Jumbo jet survivor begs for refuge

By RICHARD FORD, HOME CORRESPONDENT

AN ASYLUM seeker who survived a ten-hour ordeal stowed away in the wheel bay of a jumbo jet which killed his younger brother is to appeal later this week against the Government's refusal to grant him refuge.

Pardeep Saini survived the journey from Delhi despite freezing temperatures as low as -60C and a lack of oxygen. His younger brother, Vijay, 18, died of hypothermia before his body plunged 2,000ft as the Boeing 747's undercarriage was lowered for landing at Heathrow.

Mr Saini, 22, managed to cling on as the aircraft sped along the runway and taxied towards its bay last October. He was discovered staggering across the tarmac after the terminal.

Doctors believe he might have lived because of the extreme cold, which would have put his body into a form of suspended animation, help-

ing to prevent damage to vital organs.

The two men were promised that there was a passage from the wheel bay into the baggage hold, but they were misled. Mr Saini said: "Once inside the undercarriage Vijay began to look for the opening into the baggage hold ... we both began to shout and cry ... then the wheels came up and crushed us right in the corners. They were glowing hot and burned me through my clothes."

"I don't know when I became unconscious and I cannot recall anything that happened to Vijay."

Mr Saini claims he was fleeing from persecution in India after being wrongly targeted as a Sikh separatist. He is being cared for by his uncle, Tarsem Singh, in west London.

A Home Office spokeswoman refused to comment on the case.

TV & RADIO	46, 47	LETTERS	19	ARTS	35-37	SPORT	42-46, 48
WEATHER	24	OBITUARIES	21	CHESS & BRIDGE	42	STYLE	16
CROSSWORD	24, 48	SIMON JENKINS	18	COURT & SOCIAL	20	MEDIA & MARKETING	22, 23

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Evergreen spectacle of contest between fear and loathing

Before the last election, Labour's Gerald Kaufman said it was a contest "between fear and loathing": the voters' fear of Labour, and loathing of the Tories. Yesterday in Parliament an MP from each side proved Mr Kaufman's insight evergreen. A Tory asked the Prime Minister a question calculated to please an industry by part of which it is paid. The spectacle was loathsome. And a Labour MP read his point of order from an electronic paging device. The chilling sight struck fear into our minds.

To be selected to question the PM

is a lucky chance and comes rarely. So we did wonder quite why John Greenway (Ryedale) chose his prime-time slot during one of the last PM's Questions in this Parliament to make a silted enquiry about Mr Major's attitude to the Insurance Institute Centenary Year. Yawns vied with raised eyebrows as Greenway droned about the importance of the insurance industry. Major can do without this sort of thing. Wearily he agreed that insurance was a good order.

And there — with the unanswered questions "Why insurance?

MATTHEW PARRIS

POLITICAL SKETCH

Why Greenway? Why now? tucked to the back of our minds — we left it.

Or so we thought. But after the Prime Minister had gone, at Points of Order ten minutes later, Brian Wilson (Cunningham N), a Labour campaign manager, asked Madam Speaker whether it was in order for an MP retained by the insurance industry to ask a ques-

tion helpful to the industry, without declaring his interest.

It is in order, a Miss Boothroyd reminded Wilson. MPs do not declare interests before questions, only before speeches. Their interests are declared in the register, where Mr Greenway's are properly listed — as he was quick to point out. Director of a broking firm and member of the Insurance Brokers' Registration Council, he is parliamentary adviser to the Institute of Insurance Brokers, for which he gets £10,001 — £15,000? Nor had Greenway any financial interest in the centenary — as he pointed out.

But what a crass, insensitive thing to do. Has all the public fuss and alarm over Members' interests simply passed in one of this MP's large ears and out the other? Do they notice anything, these people? Smarter MPs than Mr Greenway — who are corrupt, and he is not — presumably team up with an MP retained by a different interest, each asking the other's question.

This is the kind of Tory that could eat pork in the street in Algiers during Ramadan, and profess himself surprised that anyone took exception that he was not a Muslim.

One sometimes wonders whether a section of the Tory party pops up occasionally into the chamber from burrows where it lives beneath the Palace of Westminster, with connecting tunnels emerging into champagne-and-canapé receptions for the faithful in their constituencies, and, travelling between the two, never emerge into the light of what the rest of us are

pleased to call Britain. Loathing for the Tories filled my heart. Then I spotted the redoubtable Mr Wilson peering, as he spoke, at a small black pager cradled in his hand over the ancient dispatch box.

Someone outside was messaging him with the facts. Could it be the communications supremo Peter Mandelson, in some bunker in the Walworth Road?

Fear of these android pusses liquid nitrogen coursing through their veins, filled my mind. My mind wrestled with my heart. Fear versus loathing. Kaufman was right.

Euro Court ruling cancels rights of contract workers

BY CHRISTINE BUCKLEY, INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

CONTRACT workers in hospitals, councils and other services could lose all employment rights under a European Court ruling.

Passing judgment in the case of a German cleaning lady, judges in Luxembourg said the transfer of a contract from one company to another did not necessarily oblige the new employer to take on its predecessor's guarantees.

Until now, legislation under Europe's Acquired Rights Directive has been assumed to mean that a company taking over a service contract was obliged to take on all service staff and maintain the inherited terms of pay and conditions.

In Britain, the outcome has potentially far-reaching consequences for hundreds of thousands of people in cleaning, catering, ground maintenance, information technology, vehicle maintenance, legal services, housing maintenance and other sectors where contracting arrangements have become the norm.

The verdict brought immediate calls for changes in European law to reinstate protection for the contract-services sector. There are about 250 contract companies working for local authorities, another 150 attached to the National Health Service and 60 more on the payroll of central government departments.

The Public Contractors' Association called for talks with the Department of Trade and Industry, as well as Padraig Flynn, the EU Commissioner

responsible for social policy, and Britain's two Commissioners, Neil Kinnock and Sir Leon Brittan.

Cliff Davis-Coleman, a spokesman for the association, said: "This judgment states that companies that have taken on liabilities cannot pass them on when the contract comes to term, unless the transfer of a contract from one undertaking to another is accompanied by significant tangible or intangible assets or the taking over by a new employer of a major part of the workforce."

The Luxembourg ruling stems from a court case in Germany launched by Ayse Suzen, who lost her job as a cleaning lady when her employer lost its contract with the school where she worked. Frau Suzen challenged the decision by the new contractor not to re-employ the cleaning workers who had been dismissed by their original employer.

The ruling, which said that

Frau Suzen could not keep her employment rights after a contract for the business had gone to a new employer who kept her on, flew against previous safeguards for workers under the Acquired Rights Directive.

Rodney Bickerstaffe, head of Unison, Britain's biggest union, which has a large membership in the service sector, said rights under European law should remain intact. "Each case of transfer of undertakings will still have to be considered on its facts."

Leading article, page 19



Angela Browning plans abattoir league tables

Meat hygiene rules

Continued from page 1

the AMI has felt it necessary to allow this letter to be circulated.

I am very surprised that the very body which has the enforcement role within the slaughterhouses should be criticising

because they are the people I expect to be carrying out this obligation.

The very fact that we have carried out official reprimands to inspectors and have been prepared to sack them shows that the MHS will

enforce the legislation and check the inspectors are doing their job.

Mr Comrie, who denied leaking his letter, said he had been prompted by hundreds of unsolicited letters from his members complaining about abattoir standards.

He agreed that he had lost a

contract with his local authority to inspect abattoirs when the Meat Hygiene Service came into operation, but said: "I haven't got a grudge against them."

But employers are likely to use the ruling to step up the battle for contracts in the service sector, because it would enable them to keep costs down by not honouring the existing employment terms. The ruling is bad news for companies that lose contracts, however, as they will be left without the business but with all the costs of redundancies.

Leading article, page 19

Police cells must take jail overspill

BY RICHARD FORD, HOME CORRESPONDENT

THE Prison Service is preparing to hold offenders in police cells as the number of prisoners rises by about 300 a week towards a record 60,000.

Police forces have been advised to be ready to take prisoners within the next two weeks when the 135 jails in England and Wales reach capacity. Prison governors warned yesterday that the system was at breaking point, with inmates being bussed around the country to find empty accommodation.

David Roodan, general secretary of the Prison Governors' Association, said: "Last week 134 prisoners were bussed from the North of England to the South to find empty cells — that is crazy. The Prison Service is chock-a-block."

Chris Scott, chairman of the governor's association, said the prison population had soared in the first few months of the year, reaching 59,156 at

the end of last week. He told the governors' annual conference at Buxton in Derbyshire: "Surely it is sensible to admit that we can no longer cope with this unprecedented rise. It is wise at a time when a rising prison population heightens the potential for disturbance to bring into place accommodation which in normal circumstances we would consider insecure?"

Mr Scott said governors had a duty to point out to the public the inherent dangers of imprisoning more and more people in overcrowded conditions.

■ Ann Widdecombe became a record-breaker yesterday as the first prison minister to visit all 129 jails in England and Wales. Miss Widdecombe, who took on her present Home Office job in July 1995, completed her odyssey at Spring Hill open prison at Grendon Underwood, Buckinghamshire.

Mackay does U-turn on fees after judges' rebuke

BY FRANCES GIBB, LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

THE Lord Chancellor bowed yesterday to a High Court ruling against him last week and said he would reinstate rules to reduce or waive civil court fees on grounds of financial hardship.

Lord Mackay of Clashfern

said he would reimburse fees paid by anyone who could show that they would have qualified under the rules for waivers or exemptions that were abolished in January.

The Lord Chancellor said he would not be seeking leave to challenge the High Court ruling last week, in which two judges held that he had acted unlawfully by introducing large rises in court fees at the same time as ending hardship exemptions. He had been expected to challenge his defeat.

A statement said: "The Lord Chancellor remains concerned about the potential

injustice where litigants in person, who are exempted or remitted from court fees, bring unjustified actions against defendants who must then pay to defend themselves with no prospect of recovering their costs."

The High Court judgment implied that this was a matter for Parliament, and he will "consider it further in this light".

The move was welcomed by the Legal Action Group and the Law Society, which had urged the Lord Chancellor to reinstate the fee exemptions. Lord Mackay made clear, however, that he was uneasy about the possibility of spurious legal action being brought by people who did not have to pay court costs.

Lord Justice Rose, sitting with Mr Justice Laws, said that the Lord Chancellor had denied poor people their ancient common law right of access to the courts.

Carey supports formation of Palestinian state

Continued from page 1

people may live at peace. "As I read it, I realised how much I take for granted the sense of belonging and identification I find in being British and being part of a proud and confident nation. Can I deprive others of that right? Surely not."

The sermon was delivered only a week before crucial talks, now very

much in jeopardy, on the final status of Jerusalem and other key issues.

"The world prays for the peace of Jerusalem because we know that if it is possible here, it is possible anywhere," Dr Carey told a congregation that included 35 Anglican archbishops. "Sympathetic outsiders such as myself can hear the justified longings of the two peoples of this land."

He added: "We are at one with the people of Israel in their search for a lasting peace. The Jewish people have suffered enough in their long and terrible journey. They long to dismantle their weapons and beat their swords into ploughshares."

Describing the Holy City as a place "where dreams collide", Dr Carey hit out at both Jewish and Palestinian

extremists, whom he accused of using the name of religion to justify murderous attacks.

"Often inflammatory words are backed up with financial support for extremist groups which murder innocent people and justify it in the name of religion," he said. "There can be no peace if violence is used to threaten and browbeat others."

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Arbroath and St Ives mourn loss

Seven fishermen feared drowned as boats capsize

By GILLIAN BOWDITCH, SCOTLAND CORRESPONDENT, AND RICHARD DUCE

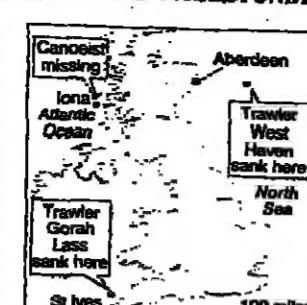
TWO fishing communities were in mourning yesterday as seven men were feared dead in separate accidents.

Hope faded for four fishermen from Arbroath, Angus, when their vessel was discovered on the seabed a hundred miles from the coast of Aberdeen in water 140ft deep. In St Ives, Cornwall, it became clear that three friends who went missing in thick fog after setting out to lay their fishing nets would not be coming home.

The men from Arbroath — skipper George Pattison, 38, first mate Mark Hannah, 30, Christopher Prouse, 22, and Alan Cunningham, 28 — are believed to have died when the *Westhaven* capsized and sank after its fishing tackle became caught on the seabed.

An intensive search involving ten boats, two helicopters and the warship *HMS Guernsey*, continued all day yesterday for the 65ft boat, which was trawling for white fish and prawns. Shortly before lunchtime the wreck was located and by afternoon a remote control camera identified it. There was no sign of the men. The search was called off after underwater cameras discovered that the two lifeboats were still attached to the sunken vessel.

The distress of the men's families was compounded by



An eight-hour delay in launching the search because of confusion over boat names.

Mr Pattison, whose family have been fishing for several generations, bought the *Westhaven*, the largest boat in the Arbroath fleet, from Danny Buchan, a skipper from Fraserburgh, at Christmas. Mr Buchan then bought a replacement boat, which he renamed the *Westhaven*. Both *Westhavens* were operating in the same area on Monday.

At about 11.15am, Aberdeen coastguard received a signal from a distress beacon. They traced the number to the Fraserburgh-registered *Westhaven*, and when Mr Buchan confirmed that he was fine, he was asked to deactivate the beacon.

The coastguard continued to receive a distress signal throughout Monday afternoon and continued to try to locate the beacon. It was not until about 5.30pm, when a lifebelt from the Arbroath-registered *Westhaven* was recovered, that it was realised a trawler had gone down.

Mr Buchan said he had heard Mr Pattison's brother Gordon, skipper of the *Deejay*, radioing to say his brother had reported getting his net caught on something at about 9.30am on Monday.

Peter Donald, manager of the Fishermen's Association in Arbroath, said: "The community here is numb with shock. It's the biggest disaster we have had in a long time. We've lost boats before and men before, but never a ship and crew together. Boats can be replaced; men can't."

At the other end of the country, the people of St Ives gathered on the quayside early yesterday out of respect rather than hope for the three Cornish fisherman lost at sea. Their vessel, the *Gorah Lass*, was eventually found 300ft down on the seabed two miles northwest of Porthreath. The bodies of William Pirie, 40, and Steven Cooper were recovered, but there was no sign of the skipper. Philip Benney, 38.

The men had set out at 4pm on Monday to fish for Dover sole. An air-sea rescue search was launched when the boat vanished from radar screens at 4.45am yesterday.

Mr Pirie's widow, Paula, 37, said the crew had made all the necessary weather checks before setting out to sea.

Captain Phil Morran, honorary secretary of St Ives Lifeboat, said that the *Gorah Lass* had made contact with another fishing vessel, the *Endeavour*, and relayed the message she was about to haul in her nets and head for home. The *Endeavour* then received a garbled message and the captain saw that the *Gorah Lass* had disappeared from the radar screen. He alerted the coastguard.

Joan Symons, mayor of St Ives, said there would be an appeal to raise money for relatives of the drowned men.

The lost boats *Gorah Lass*, top, and the *Westhaven*

Missing canoeist's paddle found off coast of Iona

By SHIRLEY ENGLISH

A SOLO canoeist was feared drowned last night after her paddle was spotted five miles off the Scottish island of Iona. Gill Webster, 33, has been missing since Monday night after setting out from the West Coast isle at 5pm.

Yesterday lunchtime a helicopter from *HMS Gannet*, which had been searching for 12 hours, sighted the paddle to the northwest of Iona. Ms Webster, a care worker described as a very experienced canoeist, was reported missing by friends at 11pm on Monday when she failed to return home to hercroft.

Islanders took to their fishing boats to assist Oban Coastguard and the Tobarvorlich lifeboat in the search.

Fur flies as charity ditches supermodel

By KATHRYN KNIGHT

THE supermodel Naomi Campbell was sacked yesterday as the figurehead of an international animal charity for wearing a full-length fur coat in a fashion show.

Peta (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals) accused the 26-year-old model of being a hypocrite after seeing her in animal skins at a show in Milan for Fendi, Italy's leading furrier. She appeared alongside other models, including Stella Tennant, and Jodie Kidd, who wore mink, exotic leopard pelts and rare Scandinavian fox fur.

The charity had forgiven the model for wearing fur at an earlier show because she said she thought the outfit was fake. But after seeing the latest pictures, Dan Williams, head of Peta, wrote to her asking: "Are you the same person who tearfully told me, in New York and Paris, how disgusted you were by the needless suffering behind each fur?"

"Your name and image will be removed from all future Peta literature, as it is a disgrace to the many animal-friendly fashion leaders who

which continued around the coast throughout the night and was extended to a ten-mile radius of the island yesterday morning. Ms Webster had set out from Iona pier and was last seen by the crew of a fishing vessel, *Silver Spray*, about 5.30pm on Monday just north of the island's Findlay's Point. Oban Coastguard said the search had been hampered by the fact that the canoe was said to be a dull colour and difficult to spot.

On the Scottish mainland, the body of a climber who fell 500ft to his death was found yesterday by mountain rescuers after a two-hour search. The man, who has not been named, had been walking alone on Ben Nevis and Am Bodach in Highland.

The death is the latest in a series of accidents on the Scottish mountains this year. Three climbers were taken to hospital after weekend accidents on Ben Nevis and Am Bodach in Highland.

Mystery of actor's death in bike crash

By TIM JONES

A BRITISH actor who hoped to make his name in America died after his motorcycle crashed in mysterious circumstances, an inquest in west London was told yesterday.

Mark Frankel, 34, who played a Jewish London estate agent who discovers his father is a Yorkshire pig rearing in *Leon the Pig Farmer*, died last September after falling off his Harley-Davidson in Chiswick, west London.

A police accident investigator said there was no apparent reason for the accident. Mr Frankel's widow, Caroline, 32, who was pregnant when he died, said her husband had always been fascinated by motorcycles and the one he had been riding was one of only six in the world. She said he was an extremely careful rider. The couple also had a three-year-old son.

Mr Frankel had appeared in a number of American television shows and his mother Grace said that he believed his future was in the States. An open verdict was recorded.



Young — and not so young — fans of Sir Paul McCartney outside Buckingham Palace for the former Beatle's investiture yesterday

It was thirty two years ago today...

By JOE JOSEPH

SIR PAUL McCARTNEY kept looking over his shoulder for the other three. "It seems strange being here without them," he said. The former Beatle who was at Buckingham Palace yesterday to receive his knighthood, added: "This brings back memories of 1965."

Sir Paul, who actually remembers the Sixties the first time they were fashionable, was dressed in traditional morning coat. He was staring through the palace gates at some screaming fans — neither quite as many as came to see the Beatles when they were made MBEs in 1965, nor probably quite so eager to rip off his clothes and lock themselves into a hotel bedroom with him for 48 hours.

Had he ever dreamt, back in the days of playing at the Cavern in Liverpool and in Hamburg, that he would be receiving a knighthood from the Queen? No, he had not. "It would have been seen as a joke," Sir Paul said.

The man who may have coined almost as many memorable phrases as Cole Porter grabbed an off-the-shelf cliché when asked what the knight-

hood meant to him. "This is one of the best days of my life." So much for drugs, transcendental meditation and love-ins, in that case.

"It's fantastic. The sky is blue and it's springtime. My mum and dad would have been extremely proud — and perhaps they are. It's just a huge honour. Coming from a small Liverpool terraced house to this house is quite a journey." He made the journey

in a chauffeur-driven blue Mercedes. George and Ringo still treat him as the same old Paul they always knew. "They call me 'Your Holiness,'" McCartney's wife, Linda, was not with him, but three of their four children — James, 19, Mary, 27, and Stella, 25 — were. "I would have loved the whole family to be here, but when we heard there were only three tickets, we had to draw straws, and Linda and Heather

decided to stay out of the limelight. We're going out to lunch. Linda will be there." And off he went, waving at the world through the Mercedes sunroof. But not before, in his own words, he had managed to get a plug in for his latest project. "I'm writing a full-length orchestral piece for the London Symphony Orchestra which is due to be performed at the Albert Hall on October 14."

Forced to play second fiddle to Sir Paul was Joan Collins, who received the insignia of the OBE. She was in lilac, with matching wide-brimmed hat. "To me, it's one of the reasons why I will always be British," she gushed. "I've lived in America for a long time and my friends ask me why I haven't become an American citizen."

And the answer? Because "I love everything that goes with being British." Except, presumably, actually living here. Any prospect, then, that this honour might persuade her to tarry awhile in Her Majesty's kingdom?

Certainly for lunch, with her artist son, Sacha. And then? "I'm going back to Los Angeles, where I'll be working on a TV project — but it's a secret."



Joan Collins, OBE, was forced to play second fiddle to Sir Paul



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Wigan rugby chief 'plotted bogus deal to aid libel case'

By RUSSELL JENKINS



Robinson: denies trying to pervert justice

THE chairman of Wigan Rugby League Club planned a bogus transfer deal so that he could sue a newspaper for thousands of pounds, a court was told yesterday.

Jack Robinson tried to tempt Alfred Davies, the chief executive of Leeds, into a scheme involving Neil Cowie, the Wigan and international prop forward, to inflate potential libel damages from the *Wigan Observer*, it was alleged. Mr Davies bluntly turned the offer down.

The alleged plot began in February after Mr Robinson told the *Wigan Observer* that he blamed a team holiday in Tenerife for Wigan's shock exit from the Challenge Cup quarter-finals after a run of 43 wins. The newspaper later published an article claiming that the players had been involved in an "all-night drinking binge" and pictured Mr Cowie, 30, among the revellers.

Alan Conrad, for the prosecution, said that Mr Cowie, who was not on the trip, had intended to sue but that Mr Robinson decided to "use the newspaper's mistake to his financial advantage".

In telephone calls to Mr Davies, his friend for 18 years, Mr Robinson suggested he should say that Leeds had been interested in a transfer deal for Mr Cowie, worth

£150,000, but had backed off in the wake of the newspaper story, Mr Conrad said. Mr Robinson offered splitting the profits of a subsequent libel action 50-50, which he then pushed up to 60-40 when Mr Davies refused to bite, it was alleged. Nevertheless, Carl Johnston, 32, the newspaper's editor, later received a letter from Mr Robinson's solicitors claiming that Mr Cowie's transfer deal had been called off because of the article. It demanded a retraction and payment of damages.

Mr Davies told the court that Mr Robinson had interrupted him in a board meeting to propose the scheme. Mr Robinson had said the newspaper had been giving him a lot of trouble. "Quite frankly I was shocked. I said: 'Jack, you must be out of your mind to

think of something like this. We'll finish up in jail.'"

Mr Davies said that Mr Robinson had then suggested that Mr Cowie was "sound" on the deal and that John Martin, a fellow director and the player's father-in-law, should not be a worry because "it is his idea".

Mr Cowie told the court he was surprised to read of the transfer deal. "I was offended. I was quite upset that the club had been making a deal at that time and that my father-in-law had been involved and he hadn't said anything. I thought I had given good service and I deserved a little better than that."

Mr Robinson, 55, who has led the club to unprecedented success, denies intending to pervert the course of justice between February 20 and March 7 last year and two charges of incitement to make a false instrument. The trial continues.

League preview, page 45

Poison risk of tuna sandwich

By JEREMY LAURANCE, HEALTH CORRESPONDENT

TWO men who developed rashes on their face and upper body after eating tuna fell victim to a rare form of poisoning, doctors report today.

One had eaten freshly cooked tuna in a wine bar and the other a tuna mayonnaise sandwich made with the tinned product. Both developed a swollen throat, flushed skin, headache and diarrhoea, but recovered within a few hours. Another customer of the wine bar fell ill, as did six people who had eaten the same sandwiches.

The little-known hazard of one of the most popular sandwiches is described by Dr Ian Stell, of Guy's Hospital, southeast London, in the *Journal of Accident and Emergency Medicine*. He said they were victims of scombro-toxin poisoning, which affects about 50 people a year in Britain. "This is not a public health issue. It is not a serious illness. I would not want to discourage people from eating tuna," he said. He hoped to

alert doctors in accident and emergency departments who might mistake similar symptoms for an allergy to fish.

The poisoning is caused by contamination by rare strains of bacteria which convert the histidine naturally present in the fish to toxic levels of histamine, the chemical present in nettles and similar plants which produces a skin rash. The condition, which normally resolves in a few hours, takes its name from the scombro family of red-fleshed fish to which tuna and mackerel belong. It also occurs after eating pilchards, sardines and anchovies.

Affected fish often look and smell normal, but may have a hot or peppery taste when eaten. The histamine is not destroyed by cooking or the canning process.

Tests showed that the tuna served at the wine bar contained 40 times the normal safe level of histamine. The tinned tuna used in the sandwiches contained 50 times the safe limit.

Typhoid case may remain a mystery

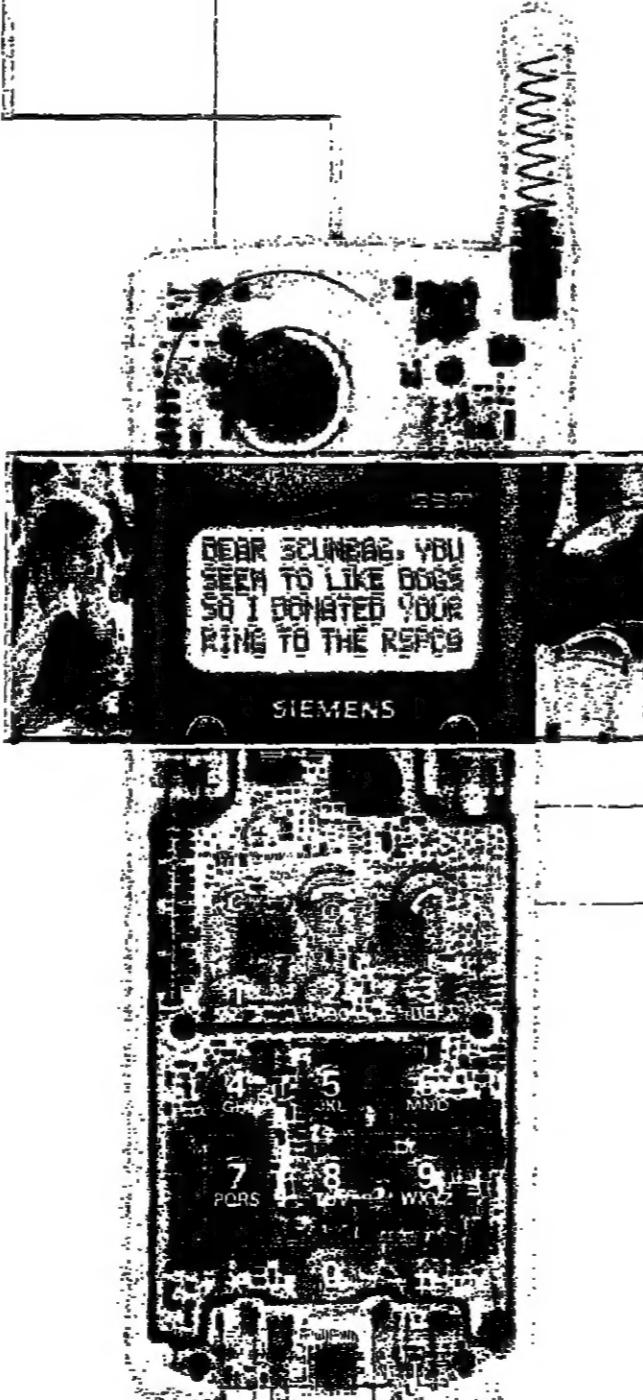
THERE are up to 200 cases of typhoid each year in Britain. The majority are caught abroad and develop at home after an eight to 21-day incubation period. A case that has been diagnosed in Glamorgan is of importance as the girl patient has had no obvious contact with anyone who had recently been overseas. It may turn out to be one of the sporadic cases in which the source of the infection is not identified: a year or two ago there were two cases in Whitechapel, east London.

An infection with the bacterium *Salmonella typhi* is always of human origin, but it may be spread by flies that have previously settled on infected excreta or other body fluids. Usually the organism is ingested by the patient on contaminated food, water or in infected shellfish. Once it has gone through the intestine into the blood, it reaches the spleen and the liver where it multiplies in numbers. A contaminated water supply is the most common cause of a large epidemic, and it was inadequate drains at Windsor Castle which were thought to be responsible for the attack from which Prince Albert died.

His recent biography of the Prince, by Stanley Weintraub, gives a very good account of the disease and would be useful reading to any doctor in

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Engineers pay £5m for damaging RAF jets

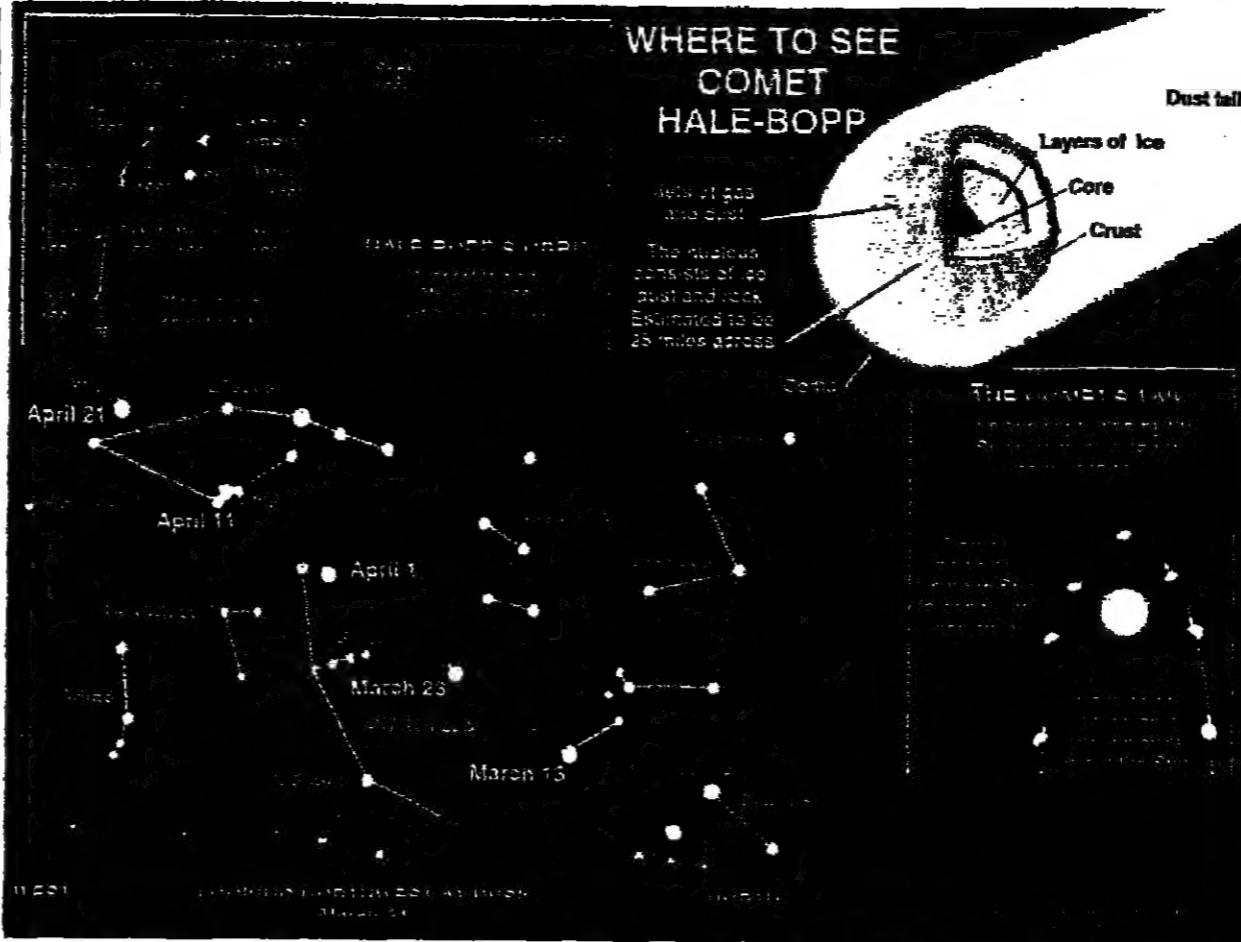
By MICHAEL EVANS
DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

A FIRM that damaged 16 RAF Tornados during modification work has agreed to pay £5 million compensation to the Ministry of Defence.

Airwork won the contract to modify the Tornados in 1992 and began work at the RAF base at St Athan, South Wales, the following year. The contract was terminated in 1993 after it was found that holes for fasteners and bolts in the main structure had been badly made, damaging the surfaces.

British Aerospace, which had been undercut by £4 million on the original contract, was called in to repair the aircraft. Eleven are back in service but they had to be fitted with central fuselage sections taken from the older F2 version of the fighter.

An MoD spokesman said that the cost of the damage and repairs was estimated to total £20 million, but Sussex-based Airwork had paid only a quarter of that because the F2 parts had given the aircraft extra "fatigue life".



TO SEE Hale-Bopp, get up before dawn or watch the sky after sunset. A dark place is best. Pick a clear night — Hale-Bopp will not disappear until May. Allow time for your eyes to become accustomed to the darkness and face northwest. The comet should

be clearly visible low in the sky. Hale-Bopp was identified in 1995 and has been getting closer and brighter ever since. It is one of the largest comets recorded, with a nucleus estimated at 25 miles across, ten times the average comet and four times larger than

Halley's comet. But it will never come nearer to Earth than 122 million miles, more than 12 times further away than last year's comet, Hyakutake. It is clear that Hale-Bopp will be one of the so-called Great Comets — the eighth and possibly the last this century.

Dearth of engineers leads BAe to plan its own university

BY CHRISTINE BUCKLEY AND JOHN O'LEARY

BRITISH Aerospace is planning to set up its own university because it cannot recruit the skilled graduates it needs from existing institutions.

BAe has a team drafting a range of options for the university, which would award its own degrees. Work on the scheme is expected to start in the next few months.

Sir Richard Evans, chief executive of British Aerospace, has already launched a recruiting drive for engineers on the Continent because of a shortage of high-calibre domestic candidates. Advertising campaigns in France, Germany and other European countries will seek to attract students expecting to graduate in the summer.

Other engineering employers are expected to follow suit. The move to take on overseas graduates comes after BAe left one in five of its graduate places unfilled last year, blaming shortcomings in the education system.

If the scheme is approved, BAe will either build a full university or incorporate sites at its main research and manufacturing centres at Farnborough, Surrey, and Warton, Lancashire. The company would have to convince the education authorities that the university had sufficient teaching capacity and autonomy for it to be allowed to award degrees. BAe said it

was setting up its own education system and recruiting staff abroad because "there is a shortage of engineering graduates, both in terms of quantity and quality".

The Engineering Employers' Federation said that skill shortages were an urgent problem. Rolls-Royce, another large engineering employer, said there was a general skill shortage, although it had filled its graduate quota. Rolls will soon recruit internationally to reflect its expanding international operations.

Engineering's failure to attract

Science spiced up for girls

IAN TAYLOR, the Science Minister, yesterday launched a new publication, *X: The Mystery of the Vanishing Girls*, designed in the style of youth magazines to show girls that science is a good career choice. While girls do well in science GCSEs, they tend to drop the subjects at A level. There are four boys for every girl doing A-level physics. A report by the Department of Trade and Industry, *Breaking the Mould*, concludes that girls are often alienated by the impersonal content of science, preferring subjects with a creative and socially relevant context.



Stephanie Layton, of Rockin in Camden, north London, wearing a pair of GW jeans from the 1930s, valued at £3,000; a Levi's No 1 jacket from the turn of the century, worth £4,000; and a pair of Nike trainers from 1970, valued at £350

Old jeans could put £5,000 in your pocket

BY DAMIAN WHITWORTH

DENIM jeans, designed for workmen but now the century's most universal fashion item, are being sought by antiques collectors who will pay up to £5,000 for a rare pair.

Miller's Collectable Price Guide, the bible of those who scour dealing rooms and auction houses, has introduced a section on vintage jeans alongside the usual ceramics, medals and ephemera.

Denim trousers and jackets in good condition from before 1971, when Levi Strauss changed the style of the writing on the pocket of its garments, are in great demand. "We have included them for the first time because they are incredibly rare," Madeleine Marsh, editor of the guide, said. "Generally if you have a pre-Second World War pair of Levi's you are looking at £4,000 or more."

Ms Marsh said that the value of jeans had soared as people became interested in their history. "Denims were working clothes until the 1950s when, with the likes of Elvis and James Dean, street clothes were seen as revolutionary and dangerous and they became a fashion statement. Now people are studying design and they want to have the prototype for what we now all wear."

There are very few examples of the first jeans, made from a heavy twill-weave cotton fabric from Genoa, known in Britain as jene

fusitan, in the 19th century or even earlier. These were working clothes that were thrown away when they were out. The same goes for the early Levi's work pants made from a French fabric, *serge de Nimes* — from which the word denim is derived — by Levi Strauss, a Bavarian émigré, in the 1850s for gold miners in San Francisco.

Vintage garments are even rarer because the Japanese have been pouncing on any they can get their hands on. "All the old stuff tends to wing straight over to Japan where they are fascinated by 20th-century design," Ms Marsh said. "But the interest in Britain is mushrooming."

On vintage jeans, the writing on the red pocket tab is styled as LEVI'S rather than Levi's. Collectors refer to these items as Capital E's. According to the latest *Miller's* guide, which is to be published tomorrow, another important element is "selvedge" a white edge marked with red faint lines on the inner trouser seams which shows that the jeans have not been made on modern looms. Lemon, rather than orange, stitching also denotes age.

As well as antique denim, the precursors of the fashionable modern training shoe are also commanding increasingly large sums. A pair of Nike shoes from the early 1970s in reasonable condition could fetch £350.

Brussels attacked for ageism

BY PAUL WILKINSON

A MIDDLE-AGED man who has been out of full-time employment for a decade has launched a campaign against ageism. Andrew Dundas, 53, a former marketing director, says he has been denied regular work since 1987 because of his age. Now he has attacked the European Commission for its declared policy of not recruiting staff over 35.

He has been helped by Ann Cryer, the prospective Labour candidate for Keighley, west

Yorkshire. They have persuaded 20 British MEPs to support a petition to the European Parliament declaring their opposition to the policy.

Mr Dundas, from Ilkley, west Yorkshire, who took redundancy from Cutty Sark whisky in 1987, has the support of trade unionists and several British companies including British Airways and Marks & Spencer.

Klaus Hansch, the former president of the European Parliament, justified the policy

Landlord's gas death conviction quashed

A LANDLORD whose 19-year-old tenant died because of a faulty gas fire had his manslaughter conviction quashed by the Court of Appeal yesterday.

It found that, because Thomas Beedie, 47, had pleaded guilty to an offence under the Health and Safety Act, he could not be charged later with manslaughter. After Tracy Murphy died from carbon monoxide poisoning at her bedsit at Kingston upon Hull in 1993, it was found that the gas fire had not been serviced for nine years and the chimney was blocked with debris. Beedie pleaded guilty after being prosecuted by the Health and Safety Executive and was fined £1,500. He was taken to court by the local council over gas installations in other bedsits, given a conditional discharge and ordered to pay £1,000 costs.

In 1994 an inquest jury returned a verdict of unlawful killing and police notified the Crown Prosecution Service. Beedie pleaded guilty to manslaughter at Sheffield Crown Court last year and received an 18-month suspended sentence after the judge rejected the plea that he had already faced a trial over the same incident.

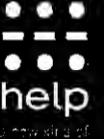
Lord Justice Rose, Mr Justice Dyson and Mr Justice Timothy Walker said yesterday that the trial judge was wrong in saying there were special circumstances why the manslaughter charge should be heard.

The public interest in a prosecution for manslaughter and the understandable concern of the victim's family were, no doubt, good reasons for allowing the prosecution to proceed. They did not, however, give rise to special circumstances," Lord Justice Rose said. The trial should not have gone ahead as it was based on the same facts as the earlier prosecutions.

The judges said they did not understand why the police, safety executive or council did not alert the CPS earlier. Beedie would then have faced a manslaughter charge in the first case.

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Inquiry ordered into 'sectarianism' at minister's office

By AUDREY MAGEE
IRELAND CORRESPONDENT



SIR PATRICK MAYHEW, the Northern Ireland Secretary, ordered an inquiry yesterday into allegations of sectarian harassment in the private office of one of his junior ministers.

The independent inquiry will examine the role of Baroness Denton of Wakefield, who is alleged to have flouted the province's fair employment rules and condoned sectarianism. The dispute has been aggravated by a series of leaks to the media, fuelling suspicions of a sectarian motive.

Sir Patrick said that criticism of Baroness Denton, who has responsibility for the Northern Ireland's fair employment legislation, was unjust and without foundation. She had his "entire confidence and support".

Lady Denton, the Economy and Agriculture Minister, has resisted pressure to resign over her handling of two cases within her private office. In the first and more serious case, a Roman Catholic woman member of staff at the Department of Agriculture was the victim of sectarian harassment by a Protestant private secretary. Last month Gráinne Hedley, a married woman in her mid-30s, was awarded £10,000 by the Fair Employment Commission for the harassment inflicted by Alvina Saunders during the siege of Drumcree in 1995.

Mrs Hedley's complaint stemmed from comments made by Mrs Saunders that she was glad that Orangemen were able to go ahead with a parade in Portadown in July 1995. Mrs Saunders' remarks were regarded by Mrs Hedley, a diary secretary, as triumphalist.

However, contrary to Northern Irish law, Mrs Hedley, who has spent 16 years in the Civil Service, was transferred while Mrs Saunders stayed as private secretary to the minister. Confidential documents show that Baroness Denton approved of and facilitated Mrs Hedley's transfer.

In the second case, Lady Denton was said to have breached the Government's fair employment procedures by appointing a private travelling secretary who was not shortlisted for the post. Susan Foster applied directly to the minister rather than through the normal procedures.

Sir Patrick insisted that

Lady Denton had not ordered the 1995 transfer and knew nothing about the alleged sectarian element in the case. He said: "Jean Denton has proved herself a fine, fair and tireless worker for all in Northern Ireland, regardless of gender or tradition."

But the allegations have outraged Catholics. The SDLP and Sinn Féin have said that her position is untenable.

Lady Denton, a 61-year-old former racing driver — twice British women's champion — is steadfast. "It is not my intention to resign," she said.

She is a high-profile figure in Northern Ireland. Her appointment to office in 1994 was welcomed by both sides of the political divide. However, it is understood there has been tension between her and some civil servants over the way she has imposed her will and rejected their advice.

She was Health Minister before taking on economic affairs and has worked hard to place women's issues centre stage. She successfully fought breast cancer and is admired by many for her hard work.

The inquiry will be chaired by Dr Maurice Hayes, a retired Roman Catholic permanent secretary in the Northern Ireland Civil Service, and former Ombudsman in Northern Ireland. He is due to complete the report by mid-April.

The Northern Ireland Office has also ordered an inquiry into leaks to the media. It is to be led by Bill Innes, a retired Whitehall official.

Crime Bill defeat may stand

By JAMES LANDALE

MINISTERS conceded yesterday that they might be unable to overturn the Government's latest defeat in the House of Lords.

Opposition peers voted by 109 to 67 in favour of a substantial amendment to the Crime and Punishment (Scotland) Bill. The amendment was to ensure that new remission and parole do not result in longer sentences. Michael

Forsyth, the Scottish Secretary, said the defeat meant that rapists and other criminals would be released earlier in Scotland and accused Labour of being soft on crime.

Lord Mackay of Drumadoon, the Lord Advocate, said that there might not be enough parliamentary time before the election to overturn the amendment. The defeat is a further complication for ministers who are striving to clear a huge logjam of legisla-

tion in the Lords before Parliament is dissolved, possibly before Easter. Four substantial Bills and 26 smaller measures are now before peers.

IN PARLIAMENT

TODAY in the Commons: backbench debates; Foreign Office questions; Representation of the People, European Parliamentary and Local Elections, orders; National Health Service (Primary Care) Bill; debate on prescribing of Larium. In the Lords: debates on the need for an integrated transport policy; the rural economy; London Local Authority Bill.

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The pro-Europe majority is fighting back

The Eurosceptics have made the running at Westminster and in the press for so long that it is easy to forget that there is a sizeable majority, both in the Commons and among businessmen, in favour of a positive British role in the European Union. That is the significance of the advertisement in *The Times* today, organised by the European Movement, and signed by 97 MPs of all main parties. This says it is crucial that Britain should remain "a full and committed member of the EU" and gives warning that "to contemplate leaving the EU is to contemplate disaster". Nor by coincidence, the phrase "full and committed member" also appears in yesterday's CBI sponsored letter to the *Financial Times* signed by 23 leading industrialists.

One of the real alternatives and benefits of the EU are highlighted, I have little doubt that the public would again support our membership in any referendum. A cautiously positive view is suggested by yesterday's survey by Opinion Research Business for the European Commission. Yet the Tory party may have to go through many convulsions, and possible splinters, before it recognises that reality. This is similar not just to Labour's travails over Europe from the late 1960s until the late 1980s, but also its twists and turns over nuclear defence. Just as Labour could never have been elected with an explicitly unilateralist programme, so the Tories would be unelectable if they became openly hostile to British membership of the EU. I doubt if they will — not least because of the weight of business opinion.

But the swing in the sceptical direction during the 1990s has made the leaderships of both parties cautious. Worried by polls and focus groups, Tony Blair's advisers do not want him to be outflanked by the Tories on Europe, and have been suggesting that Labour would probably not take Britain into a single currency in January 1999. But that should not be mistaken for Euroscepticism.

A Blair government, particularly one with a solid majority in the Commons, would take a distinctively pro-European line. As on so many other issues, the precise outcome will depend on the Gordon Brown/Robin Cook rivalry.

Unlike their counterparts in the rest of Europe, many pro-European businessmen and politicians wish that the issue of monetary union was not on the agenda now. Neither the advertisement nor the letter mentions the single currency because the signatories are divided on its merits. But both initiatives demonstrate that pro-Europeans are determined to fight back.

PETER RIDDELL

in the company's managed houses — on a minimum wage set at £4 an hour.

Labour has not set a rate for the minimum wage, although it has not accepted the TUC's recommended £4.26 an hour. It is expected that a Labour government would set the hourly rate at about £3.50.

Mr Griffiths, Labour's consumer affairs spokesman, said that drinkers were entitled to a full liquid pint, not including the froth at the top of the glass. "Loyal beer drinkers are fed up with the excuses of some brewers for not giving them the full pint they have paid for."

His announcement was welcomed by Camra, the Campaign for Real Ale. Ben Wardle, a spokesman, said a survey had shown that one in four pints contained less than the brewing industry guideline of 95 per cent liquid. "This should be an absolute mini-

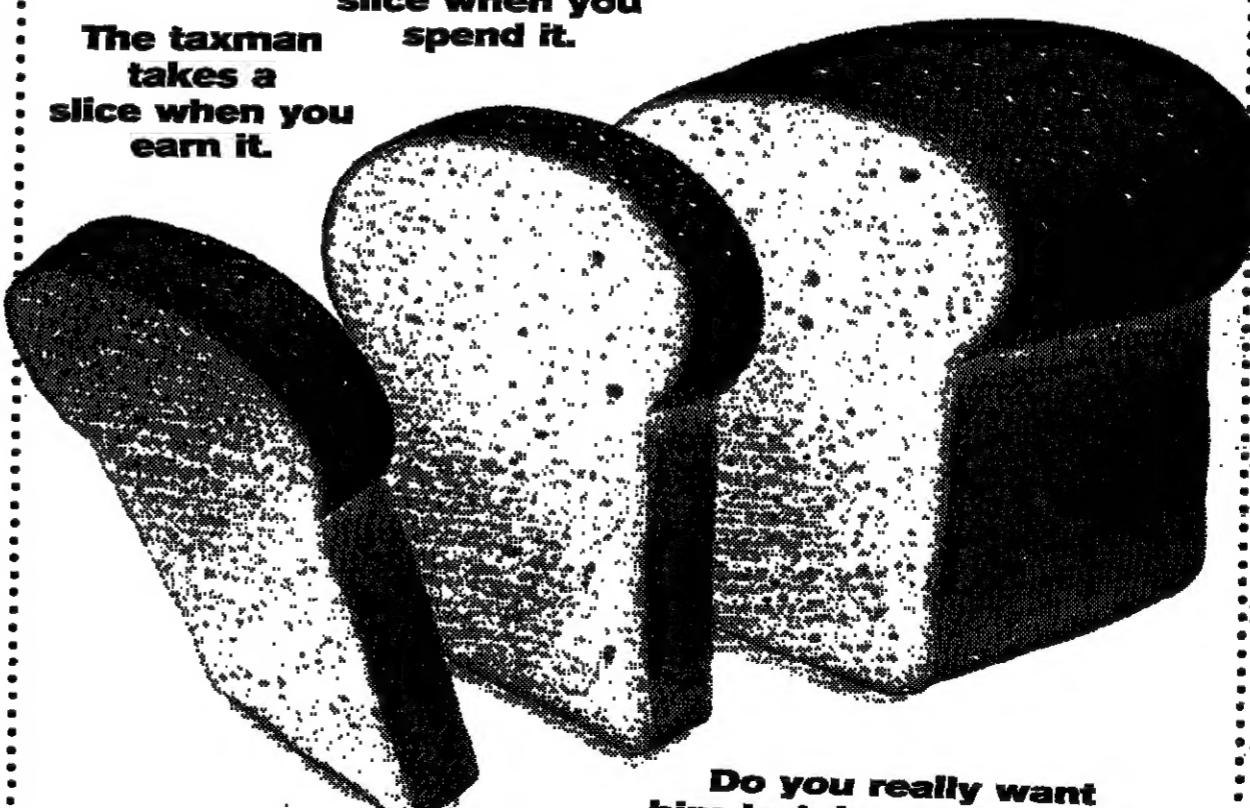
mum, but it is in danger of becoming the norm. If the industry can't do anything about it, then the Government should."

Mr Wardle said that customers were being cheated of an estimated £1 million a day by pubs serving short measures. Glasses marked with pint-level lines were the best solution.

But the Brewers and Licensed Retailers Association is against the proposal, arguing that the cost of introducing new glasses would have to be passed to the customer. "The head is part of a pint of beer," the association said. "If customers think they are given too big a head, then they can ask for it to be topped up."

The Department of Trade and Industry said ministers believed that the cost of changing the law would be "disproportionate to the consumer benefit".

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THE LINEUP
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Gynaecologist who denied having Aids virus is struck off

BY ADRIAN LEE

THE gynaecologist at the centre of an HIV scare involving 1,700 women was ordered to be struck off by the General Medical Council yesterday.

Patrick Ngosa, 39, who feared he almost certainly had the Aids virus, but continued to practise, was ordered to be removed from the register for putting his patients at risk.

Dr Ngosa lied blatantly, covered up an affair with a woman who was HIV positive and caused his patients mental suffering by delaying a test for the virus, a disciplinary hearing was told.

Determined to keep working at almost any cost, he had betrayed his patients and the public. His actions were driven by fear of public exposure and the stigma of having the virus, the General Medical Council's professional conduct committee was told. He was terrified of losing his job and his marriage after his affair with the divorcee, named only as Mrs A.

Dr Ngosa, who is thought to have fled to his native Zambia, worked at five NHS hospitals in Essex, Warwickshire and Gloucestershire between 1991 and last January. He knew, from May last year, that he could be HIV positive, but ignored repeated requests by the medical authorities to undergo a test.

Rosalind Foster, for the GMC, said: "This case is about a doctor's disregard of his professional responsibility, his determination to remain in practice at almost all costs, irrespective of the risk to his patients, his refusal to put himself forward for HIV testing... and above all his dishonesty when faced with the allegation that he had a sexual relationship with Mrs A."

The doctor was ethically obliged to take a test as soon as he knew there was a risk, she said. Instead, he denied the affair and worked until he had a positive test in January this year. Almost 2,000

women who were treated by Dr Ngosa have been sent letters telling them that they are at risk. "Many women could have been spared the ordeal that they have been suffering over the last few days," Miss Foster said.

Dr Ngosa, a father of three, admitted failing to take adequate steps to verify his HIV status but denied that this amounted to serious professional misconduct.

Miss Foster said that he had a duty to put his patients first, but he viewed the authority's efforts as an intrusion. He embarked on a course of



Ngosa: believed to have fled back to Zambia

denial and deception involving a professional colleague whose motive was essentially to help Dr Ngosa to fulfil his professional responsibility to his patients'.

He said that he had only ever kissed and cuddled Mrs A, whom he had met when they were neighbours in hospital accommodation.

In February this year Dr Ngosa finally admitted sleeping with Mrs A, who believed she had contracted the Aids virus from him in September 1995. They had slept together only twice. Nicola Davies, for Dr Ngosa, said he had been devastated when Mrs A told

him she was HIV positive. He was in the course of sitting medical examinations and told his representatives later: "I wanted to avoid caving in, losing everything, my family, my job. I was scared."

He was now under a deferred death sentence, Miss Davies said, but had confessed the affair to his wife. "Her reaction was that, in reality, he was already dying."

A graduate in human biology, Dr Ngosa had been sponsored to come to Britain to qualify. He had a widowed mother and two brothers in Zambia and sent home £200 a month. "It was not deliberately dishonest. It was an inability to accept what had occurred. It was fear, pure and simple, which prompted this man's actions," Miss Davies said.

She added that Dr Ngosa had always worn double rubber gloves when working and knew the risk of passing on his infection was low.

Striking off Dr Ngosa immediately, Sir Herbert Duthie, the committee chairman, said the doctor had a duty to be tested and to seek and follow professional advice. "Dr Ngosa failed to put the safety of his patients foremost. When confronted with the information which suggested he had been at risk of HIV infection, Dr Ngosa seriously and persistently misled this council and others. His behaviour was a betrayal of his patients' trust and undermined the trust placed by the public in the profession. Such behaviour cannot be tolerated."

Dr Ngosa has 28 days in which to appeal.

A spokesman for the North Thames Region of the NHS said he was "pretty confident that we know all the hospitals where he treated patients". By yesterday more than 7,000 people had called helplines set up after it was disclosed on Friday that the doctor was HIV positive.

BY DANIEL McGROarty

A VEGETARIAN whose social security payments were stopped when he refused to work in carnivorous kitchens is arguing that he has a moral right not to cook meat.

Simon Beavis, 25, who trained at some of London's finest restaurants, has the support of the Vegetarian Society in his appeal against the Benefits Agency. He made his decision to prepare only vegetarian dishes after he became ill with stress, which he blamed on working in a seafood restaurant where lobsters were boiled alive.

"It is not the noise, because I know that is caused by the

income for two weeks, but I am a lone parent and I had to back down or starve, so I said I would take any job even if I did have to cook meat. I complained about the ruling and an adjudication went against me. The next appeal is to an independent tribunal."

Samantha Calvert, of the Vegetarian Society, said: "We believe a vegetarian has the right to refuse a job that involves handling or cooking meat." Jim Ainsworth, editor of *The Good Food Guide*, said: "It is not unheard of for a chef not to touch meat or seafood, but if he wants to work as a mainstream chef then I can see it being a bit of a handicap."

Ex-football star was three times over limit

By PAUL WILKINSON

MALCOLM MACDONALD, the former England footballer who has admitted drinking three bottles of whisky a day, pleaded guilty yesterday to drink-driving.

MacDonald, known as Supermac to fans in the 1970s when he played centre-forward for Newcastle United, Arsenal and England, was more than three times over the legal limit when stopped by police. He told magistrates in Newcastle upon Tyne that he was now receiving treatment at a detoxification centre.

MacDonald's career ended at the age of 29 when osteoarthritis developed in both knees. In a newspaper interview last Sunday, he said he drank whisky to deaden the pain in his legs.

MacDonald, 47, represented himself in court. Shaking visibly, he said: "I am very sorry and ashamed to be here. I am guilty of having driven with excess alcohol in me, and immediately afterwards, realising I had a problem, I went to my GP."

Roger Liddle, for the prosecution, said MacDonald was stopped on February 12 in the Jesmond area of Newcastle. He was arrested and taken to a police station, where he gave two breath samples. The lower one recorded 108 micrograms of alcohol per 100ml of breath: the legal limit is 35mcg.

MacDonald, who still holds the record of the most goals scored in an England match – five against Cyprus in 1975 – told the court he had experienced bankruptcy and that his telephone line business in Milan, had been closed by the Italian Government.

Until he was charged with drink-driving, he appeared five nights a week on a phone-in football show on local radio. He said: "I am not that well off, I can assure you. I am having to start all over again." Magistrates adjourned the case for three weeks for reports. MacDonald was given an interim driving ban and was bailed unconditionally until April 1.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Driver is killed in fog pile-up

For the second time in 24 hours, motorists were involved in a fatal multiple collision while driving too fast in fog. One man died and several were injured, one seriously, in a series of collisions on the dual-carriageway A19 near Cranborne, North Yorkshire, early yesterday. On Monday three people died and 62 were injured while speeding on the fog-bound M42 in the West Midlands.

Drinks all-clear

Radiation tests on samples from 11 drinks manufacturers have proved negative. It was feared that a tanker which supplied them with carbon dioxide might have been contaminated by a leak at a Scottish Nuclear plant.

Clegg attacked

Military police in Catterick, North Yorkshire, are investigating an attack by two fellow soldiers on Lance Corporal Lee Clegg, who was freed on licence after being jailed for life for the murder of a jockey in Northern Ireland.

McAliskey plea

The latest High Court application for bail by Roisin McAliskey, 25, who is wanted in Germany in connection with the bombing of a British army base and is seven months' pregnant, was adjourned until Friday.

Death riddle

An inquest into the death of a woman whose body was dug up in a garden in southeast London last week was told that police did not yet know how she was killed. Diana Goldsmith, 44, vanished from Sevenoaks, Kent, in 1995.

Golden oldies

The yachtsman Tony Bullimore, who is 58, and the Virgin Challenger balloonist Alex Ritchie, 52, will receive British Gold Hero medals from the Association of Retired and Persons Over 50 in London next week.



Vegetarian chef loses benefit for refusing to cook meat

By DANIEL McGROarty

A VEGETARIAN whose social security payments were stopped when he refused to work in carnivorous kitchens is arguing that he has a moral right not to cook meat.

Simon Beavis, 25, who trained at some of London's finest restaurants, has the support of the Vegetarian Society in his appeal against the Benefits Agency. He made his decision to prepare only vegetarian dishes after he became ill with stress, which he blamed on working in a seafood restaurant where lobsters were boiled alive.

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income for two weeks, but I am a lone parent and I had to back down or starve, so I said I would take any job even if I did have to cook meat. I complained about the ruling and an adjudication went against me. The next appeal is to an independent tribunal."

Samantha Calvert, of the Vegetarian Society, said: "We believe a vegetarian has the right to refuse a job that involves handling or cooking meat."

Mr Beavis, a single parent, says that he lost £400 in jobseeker's allowance and housing benefit payments last November after telling the jobcentre in Penzance, Cornwall, that he would not cook meat. He said officials told him he was restricting his chances of employment.

"I tried living without any

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Mobs plunder at will as south Albania slips into lawless twilight

SCHOOL is out in Gjirokaster. Primary school pupils have joined the southern Albanian town's students in abandoning studies for guns and grenades, swelling the ranks of the gun-toting mob controlling the region.

The university principal, Viktor Terpo, wanders through the edge of the campus with an expression of baffled disappointment creasing the lines of his face. A couple of grenades explode behind him, and he jumps with surprise. Other students are looting a lorry, breaking from their task to try to machinegun a passing piglet, hooting and jeering as the little animal disappears in a cloud of dust.

"This is not good for me, them or Albania," Mr Terpo mutters.



Anthony Loyd sees a Sarande hotel go up in flames as the rebels' euphoria over their "victory" vanishes and the revolution turns in on itself

"There is no authority here at all. My country is ruined itself. I no longer know if it is safe to stay. I want to wait for any students to come back, but as you see it might be a long wait." The principal's words were understated. Southern Albania is slipping into a lawless twilight of anarchy and destruction as newly armed rebel gangs turn from politics to plunder. The situation is veering out of control and, in the absence of a cohesive

authoritarian structure to deal with Tirana or the gangs, there seems no hope of a political solution to the crisis. The insurgents' brief euphoria at "victory" has all but evaporated, and their revolution has already begun to turn on itself: the honeymoon is most definitely over.

Improvised committees appear hopelessly unable to quell the rising level of crime or to find a leader to negotiate with President

Berisha in Tirana. The commanders of Sarande and Gjirokaster met yesterday to try to find a common policy on civil, military and political matters. The scene at the town hall in Gjirokaster where they met would have made a good farce, but for the gravity of the situation. General Agim Gozita, committee commander of Gjirokaster, locked himself out of his office and, having failed to force the door, fell into a fury and had to be restrained from striking a deputy. Colonel Kodin of Sarande walked off in disgust, only to be coaxed back, looking unsettled, by a pair of gunmen. The man with most authority seemed to be the petrol-pump attendant who had acquired three tanks and an armoured personnel carrier — all

parked, complete with crews, on the forecourt.

It is gun law in a land with no other currency. Banks are closed or looted; phone lines cut; radio and television jammed; electricity and water supplies failing; the lights are truly going out in Albania.

"I don't know much longer we can carry on working," said Alek Ristic, deputy director of Gjirokaster's hospital. "Our medical stocks are seriously low, and we are desperately short of oxygen, serum and stitching equipment. Electricity is sporadic and today we are without running water. Until three days ago we had no gunshot casualties; in the past two days we had 25 victims of stray bullets or vendettas. Someone

from outside had got to stop this — the place is going to the dogs."

Gypsy children hold the Albanian border post with Greece at Kakavija. They scurried about in the dust wearing police caps, playing darts with customs forms. The army and police fled two days ago. The children are sometimes joined by masked gunmen who yesterday shot an Albanian man for no apparent reason. Down the road a teenager's stolen car runs out of fuel. He has had a gun for two days and wants to put it to use, so he stands in the road and holds up the next car to come, empties it of fuel, and leaves.

"The gangsters and criminals

are taking over," says Professor Ilirian Aliaj, wringing his hands. He is a member of the Sarande committee charged with trying to maintain civil order in the port. He is not exactly sure how many other people are on the committee, who they are, or what its policy is.

"This is the worst thing we feared," he says as another sheet of flame erupts from the hotel foyer. "The total breakdown of law, and the rule of the mobsters. This is becoming madness."

PETER JOSKE / REUTER

Berisha loyalists raise spectre of North-South war

FROM TOM WALKER IN TIRANA

RESIDENTS in the home town of President Berisha yesterday broke into two local military stores and swore to defend the President, the first sign that fighting could break out across Albania's North-South divide.

With unrest and anarchy again spreading in the South, several foreign embassies, including Britain's, advised their citizens to leave the country. Italian diplomatic sources suggest that Tirana itself could be on the verge of rebellion.

Hotels in the capital began demanding immediate payment for rooms, and Lufthansa said it would give "all necessary help" to foreigners wishing to leave.

Tropoje, the birthplace of the President, is in the remote mountainous terrain bordering Kosovo in northeast Albania. Contacted by telephone, residents said they had broken into the weapons store at the nearby town of Bajram Curri and taken weapons. "There are 9,000 of us and we are ready to come to the side of our President," one leader said.

The telephone operator confirmed that there had also been an explosion at Bajram Curri, with one person injured. Elsewhere there were reports that lorries had been



Italy brokers deal with Vlore rebel leaders

FROM RICHARD OWEN
IN ROME

ITALY yesterday claimed a diplomatic breakthrough after brokering an agreement by rebel leaders in the port of Vlore under which they would ask armed residents to hand in their weapons and begin to "restore normal administration".

Lamberto Dini, the Italian Foreign Minister, made a lightning visit to Tirana to inform President Berisha of the deal, hammered out on an Italian warship in the Adriatic. But the agreement appeared confined to Vlore — the focus of illegal immigration and drug smuggling to Italy — and most rebels in the South appeared determined to con-

plete their revolution by sweeping Mr Berisha from power.

Sigmar Dini said: "We are the guarantors of peace. We have worked hard with the EU and the international community to find a way out of this crisis. We hope we have made a start towards reconciliation by helping to achieve a national unity government in

Tirana". The Italians claimed that Vlore rebel leaders had agreed to "put an end to the uprising" in return for implementation of the compromise, proposed by Mr Berisha at the weekend, involving an amnesty for the rebels, a broad coalition between Mr Berisha's Democratic Party and the Opposition, and elections by June.

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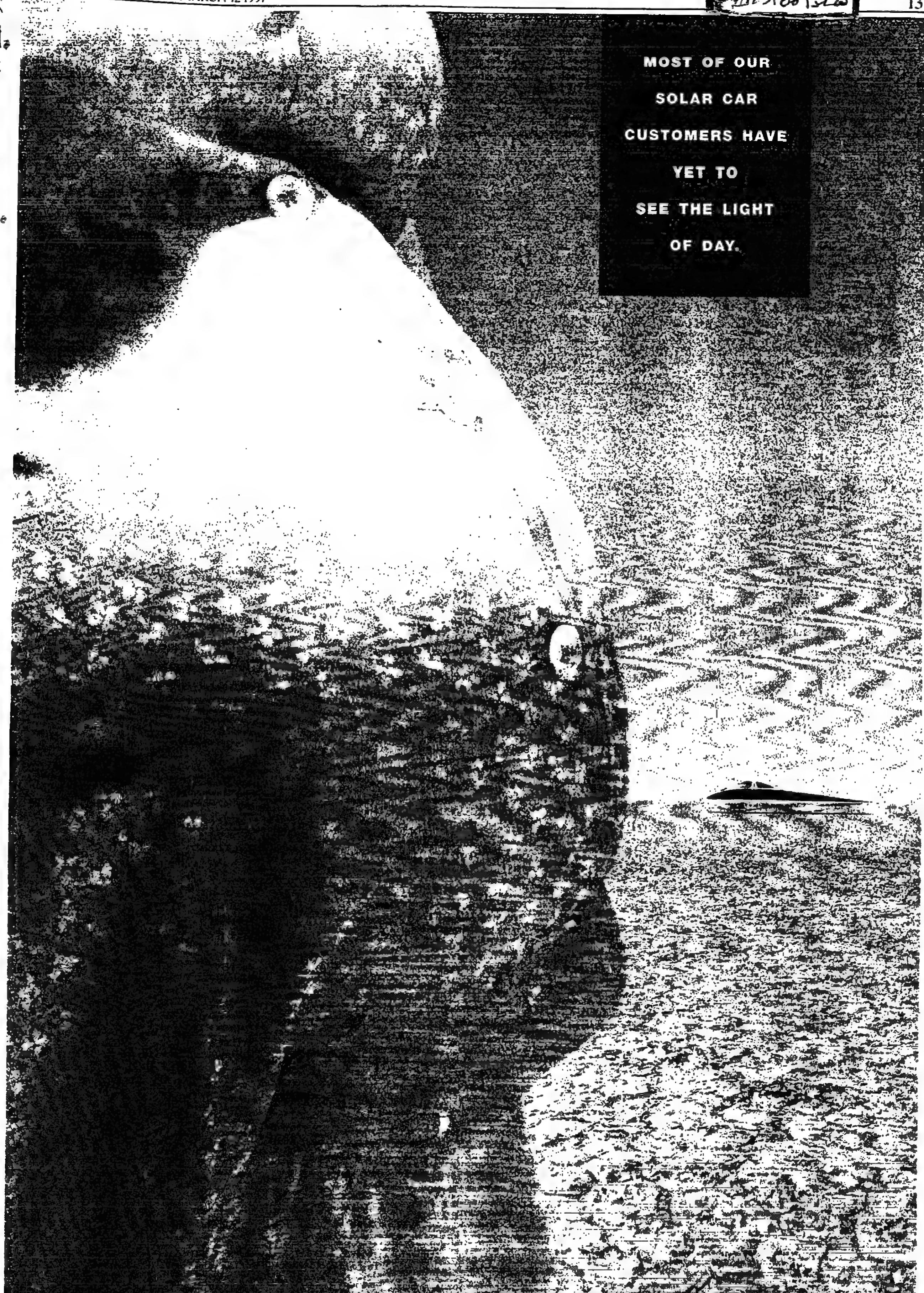
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HONDA
First man, then machine

Continuing our series on primary education: the dilemma of the middle-class parent, and how two families made their choice



Stop all this class politics

No issue punctures the smooth civility of a middle-class dinner party more than education. The Working Mother (inquiries or victimisation of you'd have thought would be more inflammatory, but for the most part either self-hugging smugness or defensive bullishness ensure that the real debate is carried on between couples by themselves in the car on the way home.

To be sure, they will utter platitudes, but few of the guests will risk speaking their mind over the dinner table. Besides, however much the subject might seem to divide opinion, there is, lurking underneath it, one great unifier: the Nanny Factor. In the rush to compare stories, moan, do all the things that middle-class parents do together, petty differences of mere ideology are quickly forgotten.

But say that you want your child to go to the local state primary, and it splits the table immediately. The argument that automatically ensues is such an English one somehow: this is the characteristically implicit who-do-you-think-you-are? line of attack.

Those whose children go to a fee-paying school presume that if you don't want to join them it must be because you are so keen on being right-on, and that — it follows — you are full of warm self-congratulations for being a wonderful, nice, good person. In other words, a sanctimonious, smug and downright *hikosme bien-pensant*.

It would be dishonest to pretend I didn't share some of those suspicions and some of that irritation — or at least some of the time. There are plenty of people who do want, boringly and self-deludingly, to demonstrate their bona fides all the time, and to as big and as dissenting an audience as possible — which is why a dinner party full of anxiously ambitious middle-class professionals is such fertile ground for them.

I am always tempted to say that I couldn't give a damn about the ideology. I just want to be able to spend money on designer clothes for myself, rather than school fees for the children. That's not quite true, but it would be a great way of shutting them up.

I don't know that my wish for my children to go to the local primary is what I'd call *ideologically* motivated, though. I believe that there should be a good state system of education, and I don't see how

we — as parents, rather than teachers or legislators — can help to bring this about. If all of us — the glibly, pushy, anxious and achievement-obsessed middle classes — are sending our children elsewhere.

I'm not saying that academic excellence is the province solely of the professional classes; that would be nonsense. But I have the idea that we now have a two-tier education system, and really don't want to be responsible for its divisive survival. But naturally, if it's a question of doing my best by my child, or my best by the state, there's no choice. Or rather, if I could afford it, *there would be the choice*. That's the point.

I hope I wouldn't then be bring on about how bad I feel: there are a great many people out there who wish they had the money to experience that middle-class dilemma and liberal angst for themselves.

And it's not just that the vocal, educationally eager contingent are, in some number, absent from state schools, but that while they are paying so much money to get their children the education they want for them, they have a vested interest in the inferiority of "free" education. It sounds shocking put that way, but it's true.

When people say to me, as they often do, and in the most impertinently disapproving tones, that they hope I wouldn't put my politics before my child, I am infuriated. Of course I wouldn't. But more: why should it be put like that? I don't want to send my children to state school because I think it would be good for them to receive a second-class education. I want to send them there to receive a good education.

If such an education looks possible, then somehow it infuriates people more. When, in defence of my rather wobbly position, if position it is, I say that we live near a very good primary, then it makes people crosser. As if that means I'm speaking from a unfair advantage.

But I do see that if you were spending £700 or £1,000 a term, or whatever it is, to get the best for your child (and I don't disagree with your right, or mine, to do

so), then the worse the state schools are, by comparison, the better you'll think your money spent. And maybe you would mind someone else's child's getting just as good an education *for free*. It would seem so unfair, somehow.

And it's only natural that one would start thinking like that, for I presume the financial struggle to cover the costs of a private education must be huge and burdensome. Perhaps it is selfish not to want to join the frontline on that one, but I don't. It's not as I ironically suggested that I just want clothes and expensive holidays instead. But I don't want to have to work all the time, never seeing the children, to scrape together the school fees. I would resent that tremendously, on my behalf as well as theirs, and only hope it won't be necessary. (And I sometimes wonder, too, that parents who make huge sacrifices to stump up the school fees can't help but put so much pressure on their children to achieve, to excel.)

The disparity between standards in fee-paying and state schools is not an absolute, I recognise. A good state school can be very much better than a good independent school. (And anyway, it is at secondary level rather than primary that the difficulties are most pronounced.) But if you live in London or any of the inner cities, the situation is certainly polarised.

My daughter goes to a state nursery (though put like that it does rather sound like a Soviet compound) and I'm pleased. Had there not been a good nursery school near by, or had she not got a place, I would have sent her to a private one. And, indeed, she used to do a couple of afternoons a week at a local Montessori at £13 a session.

What I'll do in two years' time when she is primary school age, or in four and half years, when my son is five, I don't know. But I hope I'll be able to give them what every child deserves: a good education, and not at my expense or, indeed, at the expense of less privileged children.

Tomorrow: Choosing a prep school



Nigella Lawson



Francis Cade on his way to St Mary's — it is up-and-coming, but not elitist, his father says

PETER NICHOLLS

The battle of the Saints

THE CADES and the Mathews live close to each other in Putney, southwest London. Between their houses are three primary schools: Hotham, St Mary's and All Saints. In the past year both families set out to choose a primary school for their children. Hotham was ruled out as being too big and too rough, which left the two church schools.

"Francis was going to school aged only just four, so we were especially worried about his security," says Andy Cade. "All Saints had a very impressive reputation, but had lost its defining head teacher. St Mary's was the up-and-coming school, with a dynamic head, and we felt it was less high-powered and elitist."

St Mary's was also slightly nearer, which meant it was where more of the Cades' close neighbours sent their children, most of whom testified to its good reputation. When they visited the school they found that there was a whole range of parent support activities. "We wanted to be part of the community and St Mary's gave us that opportunity," says Mr Cade.

THE Mathews also visited the two favoured schools. Phillipa Mathews says: "Many of our neighbours had sent their children to All Saints; we had also heard that many of the children went from there into the private system, which was an option we wanted to keep open. All Saints was our nearest school; at the mothers and toddlers groups we heard only positive stories and when we went round we noticed what a happy school it was."

When choosing a primary school, useful guidelines are: talk to parents with children attending; look at the schools the children go to next; visit the school; any gut-feeling about the head teacher should be checked out; go to a parents' event (jumble sale, Christmas bazaar, concert).

HUGH THOMPSON

AN EXCLUSIVE COMPETITION

THE TIMES

£20,000 of designer fashion to be won with the V&A

The Times, in association with the Victoria and Albert Museum's Cutting Edge exhibition, offers you the chance to win a selection of high fashion outfits and accessories from our top British designers.

We have over 30 creations worth a total of £20,000 to give away as prizes. All you have to do is tell us who is sponsoring the exhibition, and choose your prize from the clothes and accessories modelled here and those appearing every day this week.

The Cutting Edge exhibition is now on at the Victoria and Albert Museum until July 27. There will be more than 250 outfits and accessories illustrating 50 years of fashion from 1940s Utility clothes to the latest catwalk designs.

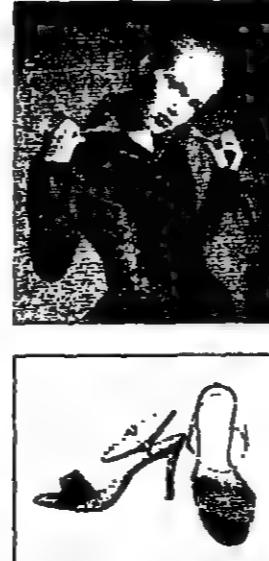
With a V&A season ticket (£15) you are entitled to unlimited entry to the museum for a year. The V&A are delighted to offer the first 250 Times readers who take this article to the museum an exclusive discount of 10%.

For more information and opening times call 0171-938 8441 or 0171-938 8349.

HOW TO ENTER

Write your answer on a postcard, with your first, second and third choice of prize with your size and send it to:

The Times V&A Women's Fashion Competition, 30 Bouvierie St, London EC8 4NG. Or deliver it in person to the V&A Museum, Cromwell Rd, London SW7 2RL to arrive no later than March 27. Winners will be selected from all correct entries received by the closing date. Please state clearly on your entry if you do not wish to receive further information from Times Newspapers, the V&A or companies approved by them. Normal T&Cs rules apply.



Main picture left: Sebastian/Predrag Pejic silver grey double-layered metallic dress (£300). Main picture right: Lemon crepe dress by Ben de Lisi (£480). Smaller pics clockwise from top left: Mulberry evening jacket with halter neck dress and evening bag (£1,560). Graeme Elliston 'Aspen' red leather handbag (£155). Charles and Patricia Lester silk velvet devoré dress (£1,125). Johnny Moko python skin red boots (£495). Navy suede fringed bag by Red or Dead (£255). Jimmy Choo strappy sandals (£215). Bruce Oldfield jersey cocktail dress (£700) and (middle) Selina Blow velvet pirate jacket (£550).

V&A

The Cutting Edge

Fifty Years of British Fashion

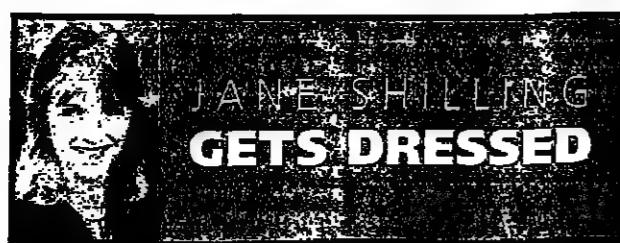
1947-1997

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CHANGING TIMES

Spring madness and a floaty frock horror



I BOUGHT a disaster last week. The curious thing is, I knew it was a disaster as soon as I clapped eyes on it. And yet I went through the whole process of trying it on, discussing it with the sales girl, and writing a cheque for a thoroughly alarming sum of money as though hypnotised by the wretched garment.

Now every time I open the cupboard door I am reminded of all the useful, elegant, beautiful things I could have spent the money on.

The awful thing is, this is not the first time that it has happened. There is a kind of Bluebeard's chamber of sartorial misalliances hanging in the closet. Like a love affair gone horribly wrong, these are things that *should* have been perfect, but instead turned out like Dorian Gray's portrait — perfection's mirror image.

Like all great tragedies, the origin of the problem lies in a couple of fatal character flaws: I can't resist a bargain, and I can't resist a lovely material. This, in the past, has lead to some dire mismatches, like that teasing pair, the Crean Jueger and the Navy Conran. Both excellent frocks in their way, one in buttermilk linen with gauze collar and cuffs; the other in inky gabardine with gold knot buttons and a swishy fish tail. Exquisitely made. Amazing value. And *way* too big. The Jueger turned me into a hospital matron of explosive unsexiness, while the Conran was so much too long in the back that the effect was *couture* Quasimodo.

Then there was the peary crepe blouse with the angel's wing collar that, whichever way you wore it, revealed a sluttish tranche of shoulder strap, not to mention the pale pink kid swagger coat which, once on, resembled nothing so much as a full-body Elastoplast. Enough there, you might have thought, for a girl to have learnt her lesson. So why do I

keep on doing it? Well, look here, I can explain everything. The day was fine — the first day of spring, in fact. A lunchtime stroll had somehow transformed itself into a briskly successful shopping expedition. In five minutes flat I had bought all sorts of sensible garments, highly suitable for a busy working mother. As I trotted back to the office with my worthy, if unexciting purchases, an ill wind blew me into a little boutique at the back of which hung the kind of garment in which the Empress Josephine might have welcomed Napoleon home from a particularly strenuous campaign. Empire line, it was, in cream silk with a trellis of tiny blue and pink flowers and a vertiginous décolletage. "Oooh," I said to the sales girl. "Isn't it ravishing. Much too young for me, though." A long silence. "Well," I said, "perhaps I could just try it on."

FIVE minutes later, she appeared at the cubicle curtain. "How are you getting on," she said, brightly. We gazed at my reflection in the glass. "Perhaps," she said, eventually, "if you wore it with cream knickers, instead of black. And a foundation garment..." And, I mentally added, a Wonderbra with a couple of pairs of socks in each cup, or perhaps a Paula Yates-style enhancement to my front. Or better still, what if I just got out of this dress altogether and invited Gwyneth Paltrow to occupy it on my behalf...

"Mmm," I said, and I looked at that floaty silk with its adorable little pattern. And the spring sunshine and the fact that I am thirtysomething and another birthday looming and when was the last time I wore anything pretty all came over me. "I'll take it." I said.

So Gwyneth, any time you need another enchanting Empire-line frock to add to your collection — just give me a call. I've got the very thing...

NECKS PLEASE
A drape neck is the key to evening elegance this summer. Grace Bradberry chooses four of the best



Lilac dress, £220 by Ghost at Liberty's



Ink blue dress, £239 by Marks & Spencer, 0171-581 6180



Pastel green dress, £224 by Alberta Ferretti at Harvey Nichols



Nude sheer dress, £120 by Plein Sud, available at Whistles

Photographer: JULIAN MARSHALL; Stylist: FAYE SAWYER; Make-up: HELEN BANNON; Hair: PAUL MATTHEW at Paul Matthew

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The children nobody wants — India's doomed baby girls and the slum victims of Brazil



A firstborn girl from the village of Usilampatti. Among the rural poor of Madurai district, second daughters are unlikely to be allowed to live

The baby killers

Celia de Lamo reports from a village in India where newborn girls are killed to stop them being a financial burden on their families

I feels as if you've been turned inside out. You've just given birth and finally you feel emptied. You're exhausted. Your breasts are painfully full of milk. And then you look at your baby. And you see that she's a little girl. And you know that you have to kill her.

Vaira Mani drops her head in sadness as she recounts the death of a neighbour's newborn baby. It is as if the child had been hers, for she speaks with a conviction that seems to come from personal experience. She knows that I know, and this, unacknowledged and unspoken, creates a special bond between us.

We are in the village of Usilampatti, about 40 miles west of the holy city of Madurai in the south Indian state of Tamil Nadu. Usilampatti has gained notoriety as the centre of the so-called "killing fields of Madurai", one of many regions where the ancient custom of female infanticide is still widespread.

According to some studies, more than 16 million baby

girls a year in India are killed by their mothers or by village midwives called *dayans*.

Usilampatti is a place of great beauty. It is surrounded by paddy fields, dotted with tall, elegant palm trees and framed by distant blue mountains. Only the earth, rich and blood-coloured, suggests the deadly annual harvest. For it is here that the children are buried.

I arrived in the village early one morning. Children were getting ready for school and their mothers were busy with household chores. We were greeted with polite curiosity. Most of the men were out at work.

I met Vaira later that morning when I ventured into the paddy fields. That afternoon, after a simple lunch of rice and lentils, we talked and became friends. Vaira is 35, one of seven daughters born to agricultural labourers, and the

mother of two children: a boy aged 12 and a girl aged six.

Female infanticide in India does not affect the upper classes, who have enough wealth to provide for their children. The middle classes, likewise, can afford access to modern technology to establish the sex of a foetus and the subsequent cost of an abortion if one is wanted. But among the poor, especially in backward rural areas of states such as Tamil Nadu and Bihar, female infanticide is still commonplace.

The practice is excused and condoned on many grounds. Girls are seen as nothing more than drain on a family's resources. The first daughter is allowed to live because soon she will assume household chores. But the chance of life for a second or third female child diminishes drastically.

A woman's life is dominated by rituals which involve the distribution of money and gifts. A family's honour rests on its ability to conduct ceremonies appropriately, including, of course, the dowry and wedding. In Tamil Nadu, a prospective groom with a secure government job commands a dowry of up to 25,000 Rupees (500) and 100 grams of gold, as well as household goods and, perhaps, a vehicle.

These gifts do not guarantee a successful marriage — but without them there would be no marriage at all.

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Russians fear a new Cold War

General Igor Rodionov warns Nato against enlargement

Since the end of the so-called Cold War, excepting favourable conditions have emerged for jointly building a new world order, a new system of security based on three pillars: equality of peoples and states, mutually beneficial co-operation, and good neighbourliness.

However, the making of the new epoch has encountered serious resistance in the form of attempts to preserve at any cost one of the cornerstones of the old epoch — Nato — into the epoch of partnership. Frantic efforts have been undertaken to justify this, though it clearly runs counter to the logic of historical processes.

The culmination of these efforts is Nato enlargement, a notion fed on Cold War stereotypes: the preservation of a slightly camouflaged military bloc by absorbing newly independent states which were recently members of the Warsaw Pact.

What is the sense of enrolling new members into Nato and moving its borders to the East? Are the consequences of such an expansion well thought out? Will such a new European watershed near Russia's borders serve the cause of security, and will it become a factor for stability?

We cannot allow the peoples of Eastern Europe to become hostages to a flawed decision presented as a *fait accompli*. The price might be unacceptable. A basis for a general and comprehensive security system could be the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe. However, some Nato circles are resisting the strengthening of its role. And the reason is clear: if it were strengthened there would be no need for an enlarged Nato.

Implementing the decision to expand Nato means failing to create a unified security area, and going back to dividing lines across Europe. Whatever intricate political rhetoric is used to justify such an expansion, this will mean a return to the bloc mentality, which means instability and tension. A number of destabilising factors are evident. Here we have, first of all, a further altering of the balance of armaments and forces in favour of Nato. This will undermine the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe.

Secondly, Nato's expansion eastwards would create a situation similar to the Cold War, when moving materials and troops closer to our borders brought them into direct opposition to Russian troops in the Kaliningrad Special Region.

Thirdly, substantial expansion of Nato's operational capabilities, as a result of its acquiring control of airfield networks, would hypothetically allow the bloc's aircraft to reach the Smolensk-Briansk-Kursk and Petrozavodsk-Yaroslavl-Belgorod lines. Tactical nuclear weaponry situated in Europe would thus become a strategic consideration. This means that the strategic arms limitation treaties, as well as further steps towards nuclear disarmament, would be in danger. Fourthly, with the hypothetical entry of the Baltic States into Nato, the bloc would gain strategically ad-

vantageous naval bases, while the activities of the Russian Baltic fleet would be substantially impeded.

The decision to enlarge Nato testifies to its double standards in its approach to security. Russia's purported threat is assessed on the basis of its military potential, yet Russia is supposed to accept at face value the declarations of a peace-loving Nato. This is unacceptable to us.

I believe that Nato can and must adapt to new geopolitical realities, by gradually evolving into an organisation streamlined towards averting and settling crises and conflicts, and collective peace-making under the mandates of the UN and the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe. In other words, it can evolve into one of the most important components of a new all-European security structure.

Russia and Nato have accumulated a certain experience of practical co-operation in recent years, as for instance in safeguarding the peace accords on Bosnia and Herzegovina. A full-scale treaty between Russia and Nato could be supported by a system of accords with other European countries that are not members of the alliance.

Of course, we face certain obstacles on the road to developing that co-operation. None of these is insurmountable, and with enough goodwill they can be removed. But one point causes concern both in Russia and the West: the potential not only for mutual criticism but for mutual mistrust. This constitutes a retreat into the past.

The West recognises that its security is not threatened by Russia. Yet when I met Nato leaders in Bergen, I did not once hear from my opposite numbers a substantiated reply to the vital question of why preserving this military-political bloc and its expansion to the east is strategically necessary. Of course Nato countries are free to do what they wish in their own house, but when imminent changes threaten their neighbours' security, they cannot be easily dismissed.

History tells us that stability is achieved by the proper functioning of collective security, rather than bloc security. More than 180 years have passed since the Congress of Vienna, which divided Europe after the Napoleonic wars. One year later, the Holy Alliance united the victor-powers. This, in effect, was the first attempt to create an all-European security system. Alas, this effort proved futile: artificial attempts to limit the role and influence of Russia in Europe doomed this progressive concept. It is common knowledge what that all led to. Is it really true to say that history teaches us nothing except that it teaches us nothing? Surely stability, security and peace in Europe will not once again be sacrificed to political ambitions?

The author is Minister of Defence of the Russian Federation. This is an edited extract from an article in the April edition of *Parliamentary Review*.



Comet [from the Greek *hometes*, long-haired] 1. A star-like nucleus surrounded with a misty light and consisting of gaseous matter. 2. A portent.

Peter Brookes

The Tories' finest hour

Only Britain is saving for its old age — so we must stay aloof from fiscal union

costly earnings-related sister, known as Serps. This would be the biggest act of privatisation in modern history, offloading onto the private capital market what could one day be a quarter of all public spending.

All developed countries view pensions with horror. Ever since the early 1980s, when Norman Fowler reviewed the subject for Margaret Thatcher (and was ignored), politicians and pundits have sensed "a demographic timebomb" under the pensions bill. Some bold individuals, such as Fowler's successor, John Moore, and Labour's Frank Field, have plunged into the darkness and receded aghast.

Their story was the same. There would soon be too many old people demanding too high a pension for the ever-smaller working population to support. State pensions were a soaring debt on which repayment was getting ever closer. Taxes or borrowing would have to rise beyond what was tolerable, unless the debt was "funded" and invested from the contributions of working people — in other words privatised. But somehow the "explosion" was always in the future. Besides, the subject was cripplingly dull. Nobody cared.

Except in Britain. Perhaps British policymakers are less vulnerable to democratic pressure. Perhaps the Tories, so long in office, have grown more sensitive to the long term. Either way, ministers have systematically birthed pensions contributors to contract out of Serps and go private. They showered contributors with rebates and tax reliefs, while restricting the benefits of the state system.

The private pensions sector, from Maxwell to the contracting-out advice scam, was lightly regulated. Everything short of privatisation was done to get potential Serps claimants off the books.

The policy has been successful. As Europe's pensions debt soared, Britons stayed in control. Three-quarters of Britons opted out of Serps into private schemes. Building a pension

has overtaken building a home as the obsession of the saving classes. While workers in France, Germany and Italy left their pensions in the hands of their governments and future taxpayers, Britons have done the opposite. The result has been astonishing.

Britain's private pension assets have risen to an astronomical £60 billion, more than the rest of Europe's put together. In contrast, Germany's assets stand at £175 billion, France's at £33 billion and Italy's at just £5 billion, says the OECD.

The resulting difference in actuarial debt is equally dramatic. According to the International Monetary Fund, Germany's pensions debt is roughly 120 per cent of its gross domestic product. Italy's is 110 per cent and France's is 70 per cent. The IMF calculates that at the end of the decade

these nations will face a gap between pensions contributions and payments of more than 3 per cent of GDP. This gap must be bridged. As Gabriel Stein points out in a *Politica* pamphlet published this month, both the size of the debt and the extra borrowing to bridge it must shatter the Maastricht criteria for monetary union. (Criteria which appear more meaningful by the month.)

At present there is no explicit plan to merge the EU's tax and social security policies, though that must one day be implied by "full economic and monetary union". Given Britain's sound record and the huge mismatch between funded and unfunded pension debts, any harmonisation of pensions would either be grotesquely unfair to Britain or grotesquely expensive. Buying out the common agricultural policy would be petty cash in comparison.

Boring though it may be, pensions debt is not some connoisseur's side-show to the European monetary debate. The aggregates are huge. Pensions threaten to claw lumps out of Europe's wealth long into the new century. Only mass immigration

could conceivably supply the new working population to pay for it. On any basis, the effect on interest rates must be severe, and the case for Britain staying aloof from the fiscal union is strong.

Mr Lilley's plan to get the State out of pensions over the next 40 years, other than as guarantor and regulator, would convert the pensions funds into financial powerhouses. The transitional cost would be high. New workers (now in their twenties) would receive rebates on their national insurance contributions to put into approved private schemes. This cost, added to that of continued payments to those now drawing or entitled to state pensions, will rise to £7 billion extra a year by 2030. But the gamble must be the ultimate privatisation challenge. It is that a private pension is more efficiently administered, more secure and less liable to erosion or confiscation than a state pension. Belief in this must be the true test of the modern capitalist.

How ironic that the most radical reform standing to the credit of the Tory Government should come in its dying weeks. Most public service privatisations will one day slither into a mess of political interference, sub-contracts, bankruptcies and subsidies. But Mr Lilley's is in a class of its own. He is committing the nation's entire savings against old age to the private capital market. He is committing future governments to regulate this market fairly. He is also committing the Treasury to rising public spending on pensions for up to four decades before the full yield on the policy is secure.

I suppose the message is that governments can afford to take risks when they sense an appointment with death. But Mr Lilley has seen the revolutionary moment and grasped it. While colleagues scrabble in the dust for crusts to throw at voters, he has risen to the occasion. He has slammed on the table with full Cabinet authority a policy that is beyond the daring of any other government in Europe. It would cost present taxpayers dear in the short run, but be blessed by taxpayers to come. It is a classic of a policy with its ear to the ground of history. We should have dying governments more often.

Alan Coren



■ Why I felt a frisson at the scent wars on Wall St

Were you, on the off-chance, to inquire why I was so grateful today to Mr Chandler Thomson and Ms Alice Dale, commodity traders of New York City, I should reply that it was because it's been far too long since I last gave serious consideration to the legend which so significantly interfered with my ambition to be a dab hand at *Beowulf*. Chandler and Alice have, though they do not know it, jogged the memory of 40 years: in a trice, they have borne me back not merely to the reading room of the Bodleian Library, but to the very shaft of mated sunshine in which that distant spring, I sat, the great epic open on the desk before me, my Anglo-Saxon dictionary to the left of it, my notebook to the right, my eyes down, my nib poised — and my ear cocked for the next mind-blowing surrangement as the stockings opposite slowly crossed one another yet again.

Where the mind was blown to need not be specified; what was more important for me then, as it is for Chandler and Alice now, is where it was blown from. Driven off-course, day after day, by the siren chorus of a dozen undergraduate thighs, it left the books, it left the desk, it left the room, and by the time it had struggled back, it was in no shape adequately to deal with yolk and thorn. Most mornings, indeed, it had to be taken outside, leaned against a wall, and given a recuperative fag. That is why I never became a dab hand at *Beowulf*.

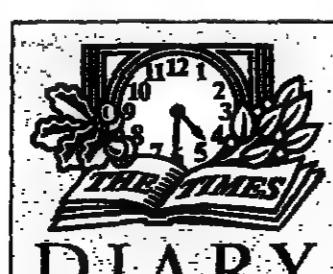
Not, of course, that Chandler and Alice are required to concentrate on Old English lettering. Old English letters are not commodities: had you, in '94, put all your money into yogs and thorns, you would be broke today. What Chandler and Alice are required to concentrate on is sugar and spice and all things volatile: they sit with their eyes glued to their screens, and when they see the spot price for faggot futures go from 17.2 points to 17.4, they make themselves and their clients rich; but if for any reason their eyes become momentarily unglued, and faggot futures drop back down again to 17.1 without Chandler or Alice clocking it, they and their clients could well wind up squatting in Wall Street with a tin cup and a banjo.

That is why the pair, as you may have read, are currently locked in furious (and, this being New York, litigious) battle over Alice's scent. For Chandler's trading performance had been falling off for some weeks, and when his superiors voiced their concern, Chandler was politically undiscerning enough to blame this on his having been distracted by everything from the Chanel No 5 with which Alice, who perched beside him, sloshed on each morning, to the various areas wherein she sloshed it, many of which were covered in little else. Hearing this, the superiors, being more feministically illiterate even than Chandler, politely invited Alice to dress down a bit, and give a shorter tweak to the perfume pump.

Alice, of course, went nuclear: Britain's long-hair, which must one day be implied by "full economic and monetary union". Given Britain's sound record and the huge mismatch between funded and unfunded pension debts, any harmonisation of pensions would either be grotesquely unfair to Britain or grotesquely expensive. Buying out the common agricultural policy would be petty cash in comparison.

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Street wise



IN THE Kremlin, as they discuss the latest round of ministerial changes, the name "Millfield" wafts round like the vapours from a bad vodka. Just as Eton was known in the Fifties as the "Cabinet-makers to the Queen", so the public school in Street, Somerset, has become the favourite of Russia's new democrats.

It is regarded as no coincidence that the biggest winner in Yeltsin's reshuffle has been Valentin Yumashev, whose daughter, like the President's grandson, attends the school. Yumashev, as the newly-appointed Chief of Staff, will be a powerful force. He and Yeltsin bonded when Yumashev ghosted the President's recent memoirs, *Against the Grain*.

Adding to the general feeling that the open fields of Somerset are fast turning into a nodal point for geopolitical networking, Deng Xiaoping's adopted grandson also goes to the school, though he had to return to Beijing recently for the funeral of the paramount leader.

Why, then, do the old Reds love Millfield? "Being bang in the middle of nowhere, it's good for security," says on old boy, "and it's reassuringly expensive, at around

the sides, it was explained to him that long shots down a table make the honchos look too much like a politburo.

Helping Hans

BOTANY is coming to Chelsea, courtesy of Jill, Duchess of Hamilton. The super-enthusiastic Australian former wife of the present Duke of Hamilton, is hoping to raise £500,000 for a statue of the 17th-century botanist Sir Hans Sloane, to stand in Sloane Square, Chelsea.

She is also busy planning gar-

dens and bird fountains round the borough. Her big idea is for people to cultivate gardens and plants which are useful to wildlife. Her supporters include the upmarket hipsters Sir Mark Palmer and Lady Christopher Thynne, sister-in-law of Lord Bath, who are both descendants of Sir Hans.

"People associate Sloane with shopping boutiques," says the Duchess. "It's high time they associated it with botany again."

• Julian Barnes, the novelist, has been denigrating the British male in Barcelona. Speaking at a conference the other day, he said: "The British Empire was the product of sexual repression. The conquerors set off on their voyages for sexual motives." At this he paused, then added: "I know that my theory is not very flattering to British women."

Safe site

THERE is an extraordinary eccentric to the activities of Lord Parkinson these days. Last week the former Tory party chairman was the rather incongruous guest of honour at the launch of *The Asian Times* at a balti buffet in central London. Now the Internet company of which he is chairman, Planet Online, has just won the

right to carry the decidedly racy website of Durex, the Cartier of contraception. On the site, readers will be able to take a romantic IQ test, receive hot tips on spicing up their love lives and investigate a miscellaneous section. Speaking from his office in the Lords, Parkinson sounded amused: "I'm afraid I know nothing of this."

Mai flies

ONCE again, the name Yamani is in the news. Anyone who remembers the oil crisis of the mid-Seventies, when the Arab states determined to push up the price of

oil against Western opposition, will remember the super-smooth figure of Sheikh Ahmed Zaki Yamani, the Saudi Oil Minister.

Now his daughter, Mai Yamani, has been appointed a fellow of the Royal Institute of International Affairs at Chatham House. Her subject: the post-oil-boom generation in the Gulf.

Miss Yamani was the first Saudi woman to win a doctorate from Oxford University. She has edited a collection of essays on feminism and Islam, and is a fierce opponent of the way women are treated in Saudi Arabia.

P.H.S



right to carry the decidedly racy website of Durex, the Cartier of contraception. On the site, readers will be able to take a romantic IQ test, receive hot tips on spicing up their love lives and investigate a miscellaneous section. Speaking from his office in the Lords, Parkinson sounded amused: "I'm afraid I know nothing of this."

Mai flies

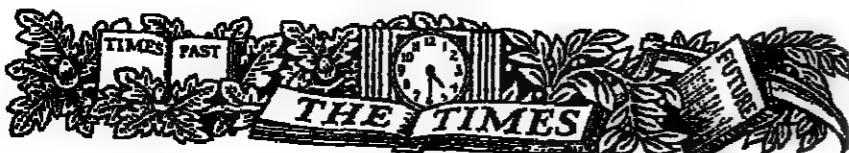
ONCE again, the name Yamani is in the news. Anyone who remembers the oil crisis of the mid-Seventies, when the Arab states determined to push up the price of

oil against Western opposition, will remember the super-smooth figure of Sheikh Ahmed Zaki Yamani, the Saudi Oil Minister.

Now his daughter, Mai Yamani, has been appointed a fellow of the Royal Institute of International Affairs at Chatham House. Her subject: the post-oil-boom generation in the Gulf.

Miss Yamani was the first Saudi woman to win a doctorate from Oxford University. She has edited a collection of essays on feminism and Islam, and is a fierce opponent of the way women are treated in Saudi Arabia.

P.H.S



ARCHBISHOP ERROR

Carey was unwise to stray beyond matters spiritual

Many possible moves might provide additional support for the Church of England. The adoption of an Anglican foreign policy is not one of them. The Archbishop of Canterbury must have appreciated that a sermon delivered in Jerusalem would have sensitive significance. The historic struggle between Christians and Jews for control of the city only heightens the need for diplomacy. Despite that, the Archbishop chose to attack the Israeli Government's plans for new housing settlements and endorsed the notion of a full Palestinian state.

The explosive potential of the issues was, of course, no reason for Dr Carey to remain silent. He was entitled to assert, as he did, that Jerusalem is a holy site for three of the world's great religions and that those who exercise control over it should recognise that fact in their actions. Open access to shrines for each faith is a legitimate issue for all spiritual leaders. The Archbishop went beyond that, however, to offer strong support for a particular form of secular territorial outcome. His decision was unwise in principle and unhelpful in practice.

Nor were matters helped by his timing. Even by the standards of the peace process, the atmosphere is tense at present. The latest crisis centres on Israel's announcement of some 6,500 settlements in East Jerusalem and its decision to hand back a rather smaller pocket of the West Bank to the Palestinian National Authority than Yasir Arafat had expected. King Husain of Jordan has professed his distrust of Binyamin Netanyahu. Mr Arafat has slammed the phone down on him. Even President Clinton has expressed his regrets. Meanwhile the brutal stabbing of an Israeli soldier yesterday will have only hardened the Likud Administration's outlook.

BACK TO FASHODA

Paris attempts a replay of African history

In Africa they call it the Fashoda syndrome, the struggle for the heart of Africa. They do not mean the war between the Hutus and the Tutsis, though that is still raging, nor the rebellion in eastern Zaire that has brought Laurent Kabila and others opposing the dictatorship of President Mobutu to the gates of Kisangani. The syndrome is the rivalry between France and Britain and the French desire to avenge the last confrontation, when Kitchener advanced up the Nile in 1898 and halted French attempts to establish a series of forts in Sudan. The Fashoda Incident established the limits of francophone and English-speaking Africa. Now, France suspects, the anglophones are expanding beyond that boundary.

This is what lies at the heart of President Chirac's call yesterday for an international intervention force to halt the rebel advance. M Chirac denounced the "conspiracy of silence" which has greeted French reports of genocide of the fleeing Hutus by advancing Tutsi rebels. And he appealed to America and Europe to support a French initiative in enforcing a ceasefire and rushing humanitarian aid to the area.

His calls have fallen on deaf ears in Washington, London and other capitals that were ready to support a Canadian-led force last year. For it is clear to all except the French that M Chirac's proposal would achieve nothing to help the beleaguered Africans and much that would bolster the waning political and economic influence of France. The West has an interest in safeguarding the rich mineral resources of eastern Zaire; it has none in risking Western lives to save President Mobutu from the insurgent anger of a nation that he has plundered for more than 30 years.

OPEN FOR BUSINESS

Laws cannot protect jobs, only competition can

Passing laws is a poor way of preserving jobs. The purpose of the Acquired Rights Directive, whose working was tested in the European Court of Justice yesterday, is to insulate employees from the consequences of competition. Regulating labour conditions can, however, no more guarantee employment stability in the end than fixing exchange rates can guarantee that of currencies. In both cases the market cannot, and should not, be buckled.

The Directive was originally designed to protect those whose jobs were threatened by takeover. It has since been invoked by employees who have been made redundant when their employers have been beaten in a competitive tendering process. Yesterday, however, the ECJ ruled against a German cleaner, Frau Ayse Suzen, who lost her job when her employers lost their contract.

Superficially, the Luxembourg Court's judgment suggests a proper sensitivity to market realities. If a company is forced to keep on employees when it can longer afford to do so then the viability of the entire enterprise is threatened. All the jobs which were supposed to be protected are imperilled; far from providing protection for the ill, regulation can harm the many.

Compulsory competitive tendering has introduced market pressures into the delivery of local services. That has been of great benefit to taxpayers. Its successful operation depends on being able to withdraw contracts from poorly performing service providers. Insisting that employees whose company loses a contract keep their positions impedes that flexibility. It gives privileges to the

inefficient, providing sinecures for those who should be public servants.

Unfortunately for Europe's workers, although the ECJ was right to find against Frau Suzen, the nature of the Acquired Rights Directive provides no guarantee that the correct decisions will be taken in future.

Yesterday's judgment does not appear to set even the modest precedent of excluding all contracting-out from the scope of the directive. The Luxembourg court's application of the directive can hold contractors liable when they take over significant "undertakings". The definition of taking over an undertaking is, however, still insufficiently precise. The Government, understandably, wants clarity and is negotiating in the current inter-governmental conference to secure a revision of the directive acceptable to all. A renegotiation of the directive would be welcome, but better still would be a more comprehensive review of the social costs of EU arrangements.

For the 23 chairmen and chief executives who wrote to the *Financial Times* yesterday to attack Euroscepticism such a stance might seem uncomfortably close to the "arm's length attitude" they deplore. In their desire to see no evil in the EU, however, the big business are in danger of adopting Pollyanna politics. The single market has brought benefits, but many of those have been undermined by counter-productive EU legislation, made worse by European Court judgments. For many struggling small enterprises the Europe of the Court of Justice is not so much open for business as closed to their complaints.

Home Secretary replies on bugging

From the Home Secretary

Sir, Dr Ian G. Bogle of the British Medical Association and others (letter, March 10) express continuing concerns about the Police Bill's provisions on intrusive surveillance.

We have tabled substantial amendments to the Bill in response to the concerns that were originally raised. If an operation is in a sensitive category, including any that are likely to intrude on medical confidentiality, the police will normally be required to obtain the approval of a commissioner — who will be a serving or retired High Court judge — before that operation begins.

Prior approval will not be required in urgent cases, but the commissioner will have to be notified as soon as practicable. The notification must set out the authorising officer's reasons for believing the case to be one of urgency. The commissioner will scrutinise all such notifications and may quash any authorisation which he is not satisfied has been properly given.

I believe our amended proposals provide a rigorous and effective system for oversight of these operations by a senior judicial figure.

The only difference between our approach and that of the BMA is in our provision for urgent cases. I cannot accept that we should risk losing what can be a very narrow window of opportunity to mount an operation because of a requirement to seek prior approval. A surveillance operation can be a matter of life and death — for example when a hostage is being held — and minutes can be crucial.

I am sure that the commissioners will look closely at the use made of these urgency procedures and will ensure that they are not abused. I am convinced that they are essential.

Yours faithfully,
MICHAEL HOWARD,
Home Office,
Queen Anne's Gate, SW1.
March 11.

Reproduction ethics

From Dr Samy Lee

Sir, The reproduction revolution has not only caught the public imagination but has also raised serious worries, with headline stories about embryo reduction for social reasons, occupied pregnancy, limited-duration frozen embryo storage, the rights of lesbian and gay couples to have and raise families and, more recently, the spectre of children from the grave (posthumous conception) ("Diane Blood wins right to have dead husband's baby", February 28).

Technology has already outstripped public understanding of what is on offer, and in the years to come there will be many more challenges to traditional values and beliefs.

Those of us working in the field are equally affected. In assisting in the creation of persons (and also in the creation of parents), do we run the risk of giving in to any aspect of human desire regarding reproduction? What are our duties in the face of the attitude that science must provide a child at any cost?

There is no requirement under the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Act for fertility units to have their own ethical committees, to which cases or issues raising concern can be referred. I believe making such committees compulsory will be crucial in helping us to decide in which direction changes may be made and how far we should go.

Yours faithfully,
SAMMY LEE,
Fertility Unit,
Portland Hospital,
205-209 Great Portland Street, W1.
March 6.

Airbus forecasts

From Mr Richard Hill

Sir, The prospect (report, March 7) of 80-seat aircraft incorporating games rooms, duty-free shopping arcades, bars and restaurants may sound like capture to some; but what damage will 1,400 of these monsters do to the environment?

Airbus Industrie plans to build the aircraft to meet an 84 per cent increase in long-haul traffic within the next 20 years, particularly to and from the Far East. In putting these figures forward the company mentions the very important problem of increased noise around airports, but what about the global environment? Such a massive increase in air travel must significantly augment the pollution of the upper atmosphere and add to global warming.

Two points stand out. Firstly, the absurd system of adding to aircraft weight, and therefore to fuel consumption, by selling "duty free" products in the air should be curtailed, not increased. Secondly, the environment surely cannot sustain unlimited expansion in air travel.

Since the "Earth summit" of 1992 in Rio de Janeiro, the Government is rightly adopting measures to reduce emissions from cars on a national basis. It is becoming imperative that trends in international air traffic should be the subject of urgent study.

Yours faithfully,
RICHARD HILL
West Barn,
The Saplins,
Highleigh, Chichester, Sussex.
March 8.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Debate on merits of public or private pension provision

From Mr Richard Worsley

Sir, The Government's pensions proposals (leading article, "The pension plan", March 6) should not be criticised on the grounds of cost.

As the population gets older and the value of the state pension steadily reduces through indexation to prices, any government must face the inevitability of increasing pension cost. These proposals accept that inevitability but also have the merit of striking a balance between the roles of individuals, employers and the State in funding retirement income.

They also provide a strategy for long-term containment of the cost of pensions on taxpayers and those still at work. Any credible critic must come up with alternatives which address those requirements.

However, the value of personal pension funds can go down as well as up. While the Government's guarantee at least the state pension is therefore an essential element of the proposals, it remains linked only to prices. The Government is swift to point out that some individuals could do well out of the proposals: they contain no guarantee that others might not continue to do very badly. Should the Government not also act as a guarantor of at least some element of personal pensions?

Secondly, the record of the personal pensions sector has been badly tarnished by mis-selling. As you said in your leading article, "Pay as you earn" (March 8), the expanded role of the sector under these proposals needs to be accompanied by convincing reassurance about its regulation.

Finally, the timing of this announcement carries the risk that discussion of the proposals may be prejudiced by electoral point-scoring. If there is a single issue which should

transcend political squabbling, it is the responsibility we all carry to leave the next generation with a sound, stable and permanent system of retirement income.

Yours faithfully,
RICHARD WORSLEY (Director),
The Carnegie Third Age Programme,
PO Box 160, Burnham Norton,
Kings Lynn, Norfolk.
March 8.

From Mr Robin Oldroyd

Sir, The Government's new proposals on pensions are welcome. However, there are bound to be reservations about the performance of the companies involved under such a scheme.

Would not the answer be for the major portion of pensions contributions, which is invested in equities, to be put into index-linked funds similar to the Peps index-linked schemes run by Virgin, Legal & General and others? This would calm investors fears about which companies perform best, keep costs low and, as with the Peps schemes, probably produce better than average performance.

Yours faithfully,
R. OLDROYD,
Ashlands,
Belmont Road, Bath.
March 6.

From Mr Simon Crine

Sir, Your criticisms of Labour's response to Peter Lilley's plans for privatising pensions (leading article and Riddell on politics, March 6) are misplaced. On this occasion, both caution and scepticism are in order, given the ideologically driven nature of Mr Lilley's proposals.

The basic state pension is far from perfect — too low to start with, thanks to its de-indexing from earnings — but

it gives real meaning to the phrase social security. Many, if not most, people would rather that the ultimate guarantee of some income in old age was provided directly by the State. Serps, with all its faults, offers a public earnings-related pension option that is supported even by those who do not choose to use it for themselves. It enhances choice.

The future is much more likely to lie with a blending of the social security offered by the state pensions and the individual security offered by private pensions. Labour is right to be cautious, for the real issue is about how to encourage all of us to save more for our old age, not about public versus private provision.

Yours faithfully,
SIMON CRINE,
27 Jackson Road, N7.
March 7.

From Mr K. D. Boyd

Sir, Congratulations on your leader today. It is amongst the best descriptions of the pensions mis-selling fiasco I have read.

However, the "snake-oil salesmen" are not the only culprits. I would add the regulator, who appears to have been asleep when pensions were deregulated. Had he done his job at the time, you need never have written your leader.

Perhaps, in the cases of pension transfers, the actuaries of the employers' schemes were not blameless either.

Yours faithfully,
KENNETH BOYD,
Boyd & Associates
(Independent financial advisers),
The Oast House,
Holt Pound, Farnham, Surrey.
March 8.

Divine intervention?

From the Reverend Richard Dormandy

Sir, Can we now expect another round of "Science proves the Bible" headlines? Evidence from Dr Marie-Agnes Courtois, to be discussed at a conference in Cambridge in July, will suggest that the destruction of Bronze Age cities was caused by the impact of comets or meteorites (report, March 8).

Sodom and Gomorrah were two such cities, about which Genesis xix, 24 and 25 (New International Version) says

Then the Lord rained down burning sulphur on Sodom and Gomorrah from the Lord out of the heavens. Thus he overthrew those cities and the entire plain, including all those living in the cities and also the vegetation in the land.

Since scholars normally place Abraham near the beginning of the Middle Bronze age (circa 2000-1900 BC) one cannot but note the chronological coincidence with Dr Courtois's findings of extraterrestrial deposits in the Middle East, dated circa 2200 BC.

The question remaining, however, is what actually happened to Lot's wife — in modern geological terms that is?

Yours faithfully,
RICHARD DORMANDY,
Holy Trinity Vicarage,
1 Sydenham Park Road, SE26.
March 7.

Mothers' image

From the Reverend Colin MacGregor

Sir, I am surprised that members of the Mothers' Union who took part in a recent survey should describe the organisation as "fuddy duddy" (report, March 7).

Recently I had to give the address at a Mothers' Union Deanery Service. In preparation I did my homework and read the MU's annual report and a number of past copies of their magazine *Home and Family*.

I discovered that there is no organisation that could be more in touch with modern social, moral and sexual problems. There were articles and discussions on homosexuality, abortion and genetic engineering. This concern is combined with many practical activities from advising the Government on the new Divorce Bill to child-minding for prison visitors. One group of branches had even organised a conference on the subject of the Internet.

My greatest surprise was to discover that men are allowed to join, so even an elderly, retired, unmarried clergyman like me can become a member. Perhaps this does suggest that the Union is right to consider a change of title?

Yours sincerely,
COLIN MACGREGOR,
3 Longacre Court,
21 Mayfield Road,
Sanderstead, Croydon, Surrey.
March 7.

Inflation and progress

From Dr J. W. McAnuff

Sir, I have kept a note of the cost of renewing the batteries for my transistor radio. In March, 1994, this was £2.65; in August, 1995, the same leading brand cost £3.39 and now, in March, 1997 I have had to pay £3.99 (a 50 per cent rise in three years).

The manufacturer will argue, perhaps, that I am paying more for an improved product — and indeed the life of these batteries does seem to have increased from around 17 months to around 19 months.

But would it not be better if we could occasionally restrain "progress" and go on paying much the same price for much the same product?

Yours faithfully,
JOHN MCANUFF,
West Barn,
The Saplins,
Highleigh, Chichester, Sussex.
March 8.

Country consensus

From Mr Robert A. Morley

Sir, Your call (leading article, "Country consensus", March 8) for hunters, shooters and fishers to unite is very apposite in the sense that there must surely be a deep insecurity in the psyche of those who can actually enjoy injuring or taking the life of any living creature.

Ogden Nash puts it in a nutshell:

This grown-up man, with pluck and luck,
Is hoping to outwit a duck.

Yours faithfully,
R. A. MORLEY,
25 Rectory Road,
Southport, Merseyside.
March 8.

Letters that are intended

for publication should carry a

daytime telephone number. They

may be sent to a fax number —

0171-782 5046.

OBITUARIES

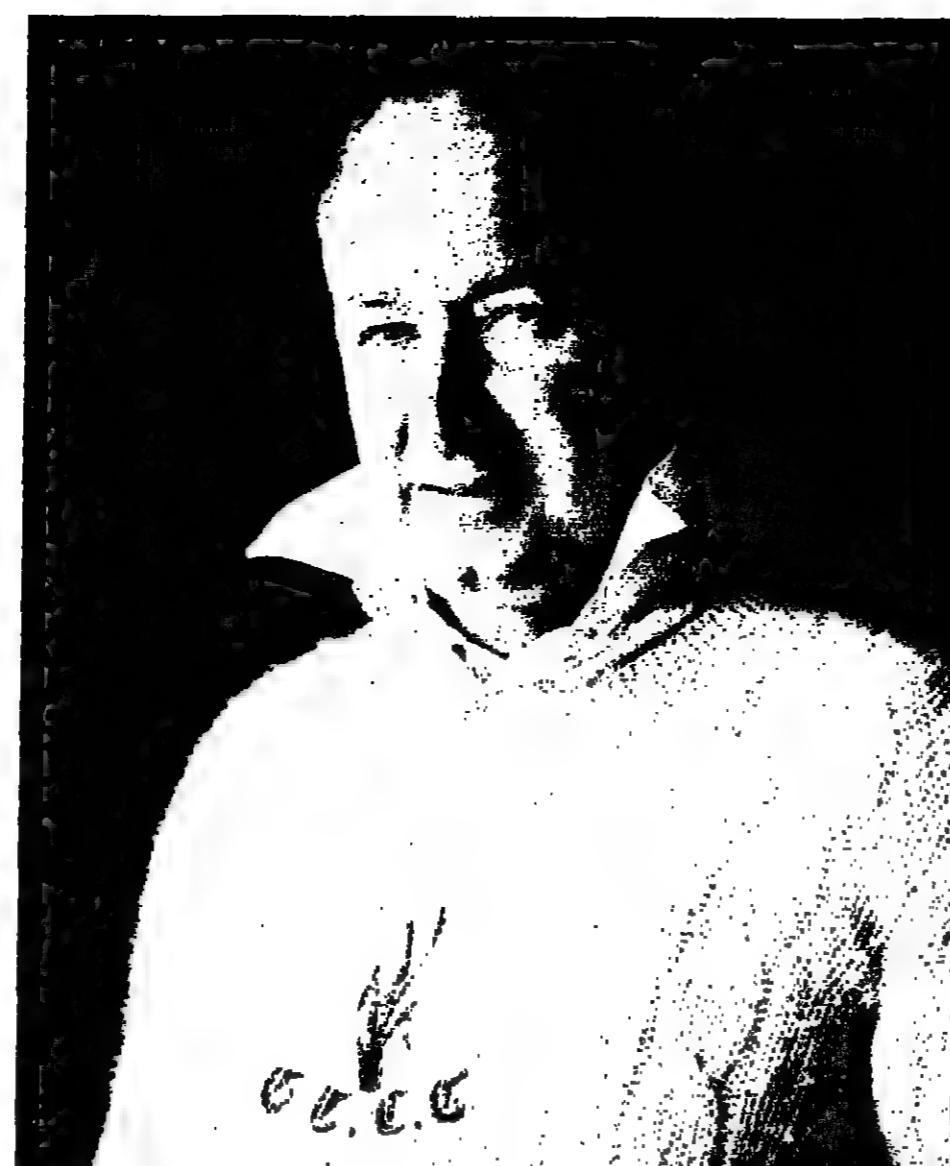
WILFRED WOOLLER

Wilfred Wooller, Welsh rugby player and cricketer, died on March 10 aged 84. He was born on November 20, 1912.

For half a century Wilf Wooller was one of the greatest and most colourful figures in Welsh sport. He was a rugby international when he was barely 20, and went on to win 18 caps as one of the best threequarters of his day. In cricket he captained Glamorgan for 14 years, taking the club the county championship for the first time ever in 1948. An outstanding all-round athlete, he played squash for Wales, and even had a game at centre forward for Cardiff City. He also served Glamorgan as club secretary (and latterly president), spent seven years as an England cricket selector and was an incisive commentator and writer on sport.

Tall and powerfully built, Wooller was a fearlessly tough competitor. "I have never believed in backing away just because you think you might get hurt," he once said. This aggressive attitude was evident in everything he did. In rugby he was a tremendous kicker of the ball, and a strong, straight, high-stepping runner with a reputation as a difficult man to stop. In cricket he batted and bowled with stamina and relentless determination; fielding, he would position himself intimidatingly at forward short leg. Off the field, even among friends and admirers, he could be dogmatic in conversation, uncompromising in his views, and impatient with anything (or anyone) he felt was wrong.

At the same time, he was capable of great charm, and untiring in his efforts on behalf of people and causes he believed in. The brittle forcefulness of his personality was almost certainly exacerbated by the three and a half years he spent as a Japanese prisoner of war after being captured while serving with the Royal Artillery in Java in 1942.



Nevertheless, his domineering manner and reluctance to avoid controversy may help to explain why his great contribution to sport in Wales was denied the official recognition it deserved.

Wilfred Wooller was born at Rhos-on-Sea, North Wales, and educated at Rydal and Christ's College, Cambridge, where he won Blues for both rugby and cricket. It was while waiting to take up his place at Cambridge that he was first selected to represent his country; he was 20 at the time, but nonetheless attracted enormous publicity and had to endure being dubbed "the schoolboy capped by Wales".

A high-spirited Cambridge undergraduate, he was on one occasion fined £5 by magistrates for damaging a telephone kiosk. He was to complain that later generations were being denied the chance to combine academic with sporting achievement as he had; writing in the 1967 Varsity rugby match programme, he protested that "the inflexibly high academic entrance level [now] ensures that the greatest number of pimply snouts enter Oxford and Cambridge".

His international debut in 1933 saw Wales beat England at Twickenham for the first time. In the course of his rugby career, he showed, time and again, an ability to turn a match with a prodigious kick or unstoppable run. He dropped more goals than most tall men, and one score by this method in the 1934 Varsity match, from inside his own half, is still talked about where connoisseurs gather; but he probably owes his rugby immortality, in Wales and beyond, to a lengthy run which brought about the decisive late score that enabled Wales to beat the 1935-36 All Blacks 13-12 at Cardiff.

As a cricketer, Wooller was a useful medium-pace bowler, a hard hitting right-handed batsman, and a brave and tenacious close fieldsmen. He played for Denbighshire in 1934 and 1935 before entering

first-class cricket, and made his debut for Glamorgan in 1938, succeeding J. C. Clay as captain in 1947. He took over after a fairly grim period in the club's fortunes, and he inherited a side no more than average in batting and bowling ability; but through exacting and inspirational leadership he guided the club to its first county championship the following year.

His competitiveness was not always well received, at least by the opposition. At Trent

Bridge in 1951, his slow bating so incensed the Notts captain Reg Simpson that he bowled underarm and appealed for lbw when Wooller paddled up. On another occasion, noticing that P. B. H. May had strayed out of his ground, Wooller dashed in and whopped off the balls. When May protested that it was usual to give a chap some warning before doing that, Wooller was unrepentant: "Not in Swansea." He once successfully sued a national newspaper over charges

of gamesmanship, winning an out-of-court settlement that allowed his wife to install what she always referred to as her "Empire News Kitchen".

In 1954, at the age of 42, Wooller performed the double of scoring 1,000 runs and taking 100 wickets in a season. He played twice for the Gentlemen at Lord's, and from 1955 served as a Test selector for seven years. Business commitments prevented him from accepting at least two invitations to tour with MCC sides;

otherwise, he might have captained England around 1950.

In his career Wooller scored 13,593 runs at an average of 22.57, took 958 wickets at 26.95 each, and held more than 400 catches. He was one of the toughest and most successful captains in postwar cricket.

After stepping down as captain, and after much initial controversy over remuneration, he remained with Glamorgan as club secretary until 1972. He brought to the job the same mischievous pugnacity he had shown as a player. In 1972 he used the public address system at Swansea to invite spectators to apply for their money back in protest at Somerset's decision to bar on into the afternoon of the second day of a match. The umpire, Arthur Fagg, once came close to throwing a bowl of soup over Wooller. "I don't care if it costs me my job," he vowed, "I'll never umpire Glamorgan again while that man is secretary."

Wooller's views on most subjects were stoutly conservative and robustly expressed. Sporting links with South Africa were particular passion: he denounced those who opposed them as "lefties, weirdies and odd bods", and told the Archbishop of Wales, who had threatened to resign his Glamorgan membership if the team played the South Africans, that "it's high time the Church confined itself to spiritual matters which I find sadly lacking in this permissible era".

Wooller served as a JP, and an active member of several committees at Lord's; he wrote a readable history of Glamorgan, and reported on sport for *The Sunday Telegraph*. He was the television commentator when Garry Sobers scored six sixes in an over at Swansea in 1968.

In 1941, Wooller married Lady Gillian Mary Windsor-Clive, daughter of the 2nd Earl of Plymouth. They were divorced in 1947, and a year later he married End James, who survives him with their three sons and two daughters.

PROFESSOR L. C. KNIGHTS

L. C. Knights, King Edward VII Professor of English Literature in the University of Cambridge, 1965-73, died on March 8 aged 90. He was born on May 15, 1906.

THROUGH his teaching and through his writings, especially on Shakespeare and on Jacobean drama, L. C. Knights exercised a civilizing influence on students of literature over a 40-year career. Books such as the early *Drama and Society in the Age of Jonson* (1937) became, and remained, standard critical works.

But he has his specific niche in the history of English studies as one of the founder editors of the critical quarterly *Scrutiny*, through which F. R. Leavis and his disciples exerted such a powerful influence on English studies from 1932 onwards. Indeed, though Leavis was its guiding spirit, the title of the magazine is thought to have been suggested by one of Knights' spontaneous utterances.

In 1947 he was appointed to the Chair of English at Sheffield and in 1954 moved to the Winterstoke Chair of English at Bristol. Finally, in 1965 he returned to Cambridge to the King Edward VII Chair of English and was also elected a Fellow of Queens' College.



From then until (and after) his retirement in 1973 he held a number of visiting professorships abroad.

Knights' later publications included *Explorations: Essays in Literary Criticism* (1964); *Shakespeare's Politics* (British Academy Annual Shakespeare Lecture, 1957); *An Approach to Hamlet* (1960); *Further Explorations* (1965); *Hamlet and Other Shakespeare Plays* (1979) and *Selected Essays in Criticism* (1981).

Although the brilliant beginnings of the reformed English Tripos at Cambridge, and the influence of that exciting period shaped his subsequent work, Knights also shared the interest in social background that was subsequently developed by E. M. W. Tillyard and Basil Willey. He worked on the borderlands of history, philosophy and literature, though associated with *Scrutiny* and influenced by I. A. Richards and William Empson, his own work bore a distinctive stamp.

He did not enjoy controversy and, though he was deeply committed to liberal causes in politics, his natural kindness and goodwill kept him from personal polemics. As time went on he drew away from Leavis (or perhaps, more accurately, "the Master" cut his old collaborator out of his life). Leavis loved the smell of blood. Knights shrank from his former mentor's aggression and the needless pain it caused.

As a lecturer and teacher Knights was outstanding. He could always hold an audience. At Berkeley during a student strike he successfully drew student crowds to an off-campus chapel. Always ready to listen and to share the plans and aspirations of his pupils, he encouraged the diffident and was generous in praise of their efforts.

He is survived by his wife Elizabeth, a son and a daughter.

COUNT MAURICE CORETH

Count Maurice Coreth, founder of Rhino Rescue, died of an aortic aneurism on February 11, aged 67. He was born on August 21, 1929.

LIKE the hero of some schoolboy novel, Count Maurice Coreth lived a life of romantic adventure. He was a dashing horseman, a skilled big-game hunter and an intrepid sailor. But it is for the work he did in the latter years of his life that he will remain best known.

He, like many hunters, admired and respected the animals which he tracked and killed. When, after many years wandering the bush in Africa and sailing the waters of the Indian Ocean, he returned to Britain he founded Rhino Rescue, an organisation concerned with the conservation of the black rhino. This

magnificent, powerful, prehistoric animal was on the brink of extinction. In 1970 a population of 20,000 still survived in Kenya. Only 15 years later, when Rhino Rescue was formed, a mere 300 remained.

Combining a single-minded dedication to the cause with a winning charm and energetic fund-raising, he focused world attention on the plight of the black rhino. A sanctuary was established in Kenya and tough new anti-poaching measures were set up there and in Zimbabwe and Namibia. If the black rhino has a future it will be due more to Coreth than almost anyone else.

Count Maurice Rudolf Coreth von und zu Coreth and Starckenberg was the scion of a noble family. His grandmother was born to the princely house of Stolberg and his father was an Austrian noble-

man who married an English wife. Exiled from his country after the Nazi occupation, his father was never to return. Coreth was brought up in Eastbourne and educated at Downton. He was just ten years old on the outbreak of the Second World War, but showing early signs of an intrepid spirit, he and a friend stole the headmaster's bicycle and set off for Exeter to enlist. They sheltered for a night on the way in a chicken coop, reaching the recruiting office the next day. The enlistment officer asked him which regiment he wished to sign up with. "The Blues," was Coreth's immediate reply. "I'm very fond of ponies."

Coreth was, indeed, rather more passionate about horses than he was about his education. He endured rather than enjoyed the discipline of

boarding school — although his masters managed to instill in him an abiding love of literature, especially poetry. But Coreth excelled as a horseman. He rode to hounds with the York and Ainsty and, at the age of 21, became Master of the Wilton. He was also a skilled showjumper and a courageous steeplechaser and later in life he was to win the Kenya Grand National.

His National Service was spent in the Intelligence Corps but, though he was fluent in three languages — English, German and French — he was posted to Yorkshire where he reluctantly remained. There, however, he indulged his love of hunting. His horses took up most of his time, and the cost of running a pack of foxhounds took up most of his inheritance as well.

Coreth first went to Africa when a friend, then a district commissioner in Sierra Leone, invited him over to help to shoot marauding elephants which were molesting villagers. It was to be the beginning of a long love affair with that continent.

Coreth became a big-game hunter, licensed to call and control. He was proud to be the first private sports hunter to be invited to become an honorary member of the professional hunters' association. Coreth went on safaris, usually alone, over much of sub-Saharan Africa, and ended up settling in the Subsaharan Valley of Kenya where he ran a farm and might happily have stayed had not his land been compulsorily "acquired" by the post-independence Government.

Finding his lifestyle increasingly, and for him intolerably, restricted, Coreth decided to take to the seas instead. He bought a 50ft ketch, *Fandango*, in France, and set off for Kenya in it, despite the fact that he had attended only night-school courses in navi-

gation. He chose to make passage to East Africa via Rio de Janeiro and Cape Town — the Atlantic, he said, gave him the space to practise his seamanship. The crossing to Cape Town took 63 days and he arrived to find that he and his yacht had been assumed missing.

Coreth worked as a charter skipper for some years in the Seychelles, though he remained all the while doggedly impervious to the demands of his clients. But, eventually wearying of this life, he sailed his yacht back to the Mediterranean. The journey added yet another episode to his life of romantic adventure. He was attacked and narrowly avoided capture by pirates in the Red Sea and was shot at by Arabs.

In 1965 Coreth finally returned to England, settling in Suffolk, where he founded Rhino Rescue. Within ten years the organisation had already done much to reverse the black rhino's charge towards extinction. At the time of his death Coreth was embarking on a project to save the tiger and the one-horned rhino in India, a task which his son, Mark, now hopes to inherit.

He had already met Leavis, and he now gravitated towards the group of like-minded young critics that surrounded him. He co-edited the first issue of *Scrutiny* with Donald Culver. Leavis, at that time preferring to remain in the background for certain obvious reasons, his just-published *New Bearings in English Poetry* could scarcely have been reviewed in *Scrutiny* with any appearance of impartiality had he been editor.

Knights remained on

Scrutiny's editorial board until the magazine's closure in 1953. *How Many Children*

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Holocaust homework: we all must do it

When I wrote criticising Ruby Wax last month, the last thing I expected to unleash was anti-Semitism. I had mentioned that Wax, a sharp comic in the American-Jewish tradition, could do better with her BBC series than make jokes about tits, bums and stretch marks. For this I was rewarded with an anonymous letter commenting: "Wax is typically Jewish, always anxious to make money out of sex whether in the media, the arts or medicine."

Was this any uglier than another, from an agnostic Jew from an Orthodox family in north London? "A congratulatory thank-you for your splendid piece on Ruby Wax — the personification of the worst kind of Jewish vulgarity." This letter had the virtue of a signature, an address and an assurance of best wishes. I wonder what this reader will make of tonight's *A Jewish Wedding* on BBC2, which stresses the very un-English, noisy and conspicuous consumption side of the Jewish way of marriage. Now about 75,000 people buy *The Times* every day, so it stands to reason that there will be the occasional anti-Semitic among them. But it was a shock to be reminded so bluntly that the dark undercurrent still flows strong.

A quick look around, however, shows that for many people, the world is still divided into Jew and non-Jew. A German journalist's reference to "the Jew Rifkind" makes headlines. The *Washington Post* gets a great scoop by revealing that the American Secretary of State is not only Jewish but did not know that she had three grandparents who died in the Holocaust?

Is Madeleine Albright guilty of the great sin of trying to conceal her Jewishness? Is the Swiss banking system built on the rocks of unclaimed Jewish gold? Should it be a crime to deny the Holocaust? The Holocaust is news. This hideous event demands not mere celebration like the other Second World War anniversaries but a willingness for young and old to face new facts too horrific and too scattered to be understood when the camps were opened in 1945.

Yet humankind cannot bear very much reality, said T.S. Eliot, himself accused, by the lawyer Anthony Julius in a recent book, of literary anti-Semitism of the fashionable pre-war kind. The temptation to look away is very strong. In Washington last month I found friends who, connoisseurs of museums in that city of museums, had not yet got around to the new Holocaust Museum. I paid a call over there. I have visited Munich without finding time for a trip out to Dachau. In Jerusalem, I was given a choice of the Holocaust Museum or the Via Dolorosa. Guess which I chose.

My particular motive in Washington was to try to answer a charge made to me in London by a Polish émigré from the 1930s

that the American press had evidence of the concentration camps long before the end of the war but had refused to print it. At the Holocaust Museum (where the exhibition has been arranged with great care in order that a visit should not be a devastating experience) there was video archive proof that some major American dailies had indeed carried early news of the Nazi mass extermination plans.

Overall, it seemed that the American press acquitted itself more honourably than the US State Department. The department was described in the exhibition's displayed texts as anti-Semitic a background that makes the Jewishness of today's Secretary of State all the more important.

How unwelcoming Britain was to the same group is shown in another recent book, *Red Mother, Pink Daughter*, by Sylvia Rodgers, wife of Lord Rodgers of Quarry Bank. In the late 1930s and early 1940s, a hard-hearted Home Office was no keener than the State Department was, in a time of mass unemployment, to let in a flood of refugees such as her family from Berlin.

Current talk in some countries of making denial of the Holocaust a crime is nonsense. This would be as much a violation of free speech as forbidding the assertion that HIV does not lead to Aids. But there is no need of a ban. There is too much Holocaust legacy around.

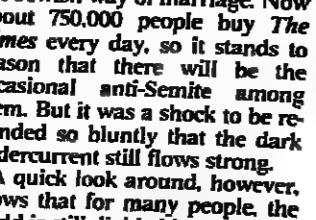
Take the current film box-office hit *Shine*, the story of the mentally ill Australian pianist, David Helfgott, who recovered sufficiently to resume his concert career. American Jews, reported *The New York Times* last week, are seeing this film entirely differently from non-Jews. The latter tend to take it as a heartwarming tale of triumph over handicap and redemption through love. But Jews see it rather as the story of a Holocaust victim once removed. In this light, David's father, having survived the camps where many of his relatives, as David madly joked "got concentrated", goes to inhuman lengths to drive his son to be a survivor, thus destroying him.

For all generations, the Holocaust is unfinished homework. The object is not so much how to prevent it happening again because it has happened again, in Cambodia, Bosnia and Rwanda. Rather, the assignment is to ask ourselves how much we are all guilty of the casual slurs that dehumanise an entire group. The joke about "bog-brained Murphies" in *Channel 4's Brass Eye* last week shows that the Thick Mick is still good for a laugh.

An even tougher question is how welcoming we want to be to alien millions fleeing a murderous regime. I'm sure that the people of Hong Kong would like to know.



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Why the press is out of tune with the world of pop

Nigel Williamson examines the newspaper coverage of pop stories and, below, Brian MacArthur analyses the effect they have on circulation

People who cannot write, talking to people with nothing to say for people who cannot read, was Frank Zappa's contemptuous definition of rock journalism. Yet pop music is now regarded by editors of serious newspapers as a vital ingredient in the circulation war. Even *The Daily Telegraph*, which for long only wrote about pop in terms of its brain-rotting effect on the nation's youth, praises the new Blur album.

As Mat Snow, editor of the monthly music magazine *Mojo*, says: "The broadsheets think pop sells newspapers to young readers because it offers froth and excitement and creates a sense of instant drama."

Yet a survey of broadsheet coverage for February suggests that while arts pages now devote more space to pop than to opera and ballet, editors appear to have put little effort into pop coverage on their news pages.

"The broadsheets simply chase the tabloids and write the same stories about the same acts," says Lee Ellen Newman, head of press at East-West Records. This was clearly evident in the coverage last month of the on-off wedding of Liam Gallagher and the dress sense of the Spice Girls at the Brit awards. But even with these two contrived media events, the survey shows that *The Guardian's* news pages devoted only 209 column inches to pop over the month, *The Independent* 170 inches, *The Times* 164 inches and *The Daily Telegraph* a not-even-trying 104 inches. Some traditional readers complain that even this is too much. But for an industry obsessed with the pursuit of younger readers, it seems negligently careless.

Mark Borkowski, an independent PR noted for his sharp eye for a news story, says: "Broadsheets say they want pop stories, but they are really struggling to keep up. They don't break stories. They wait for others."

News editors do not know where to turn when their marketing departments tell them that pop music sells papers. No broadsheet newsroom employs a pop correspondent, relying instead on overstuffed arts writers

who have neither the time nor the inclination to read *NME* or listen to Radio 1. *The Times* has Caitlin Moran, who writes a "voice of youth" column about the artists likely to be riding the next wave, yet she is a freelance columnist, not a staff reporter.

There are signs that the broadsheets are beginning to recognise their inadequacies. *The Guardian's* front-page story about the Gallagher-Kensit wedding purported to be by its "showbusiness correspondent". The paper has no such post and rumour has it that the "correspondent" was editor Alan Rusbridger.

Many of the pop stories which struggle onto the news pages seem to have one thing in common — the failure of the artists concerned to produce a decent record in years. Boy George and Gary Glitter were among those considered newsworthy by the broadsheets last month. Most of the artists shifting huge quantities at Our Price were not — and the Spice Girls are only an exception because no excuse to use a picture of them is too gratuitous.

The death of Brian Connolly of Sweet was widely covered as a news story and he also made the lead obituary in all of the broadsheets except *The Daily Telegraph*. He was the latest in the list of rock stars shuffling prematurely off the mortal turntable and providing a regular supply of good copy. Yet even here editors frequently get it wrong. As pop publicist Richard Wootton points out: "Newspapers filled

pages when Jerry Garcia died, and they all knew about Sweet. But when Kurt Cobain of Nirvana committed suicide, no one in Fleet Street seemed to understand the significance."

One news editor had to ask who Chris Evans was on his departure from Radio 1. Another admitted to never having heard of the Spice Girls before their *Spectator* interview.

A different story emerges when we turn to the arts and review pages. Our survey showed that *The Guardian* and *The Independent* (both of which have regular weekly pop sections) leading the way with 1,736 and 1,652 column inches. *The Times*

was stuck in the middle with 1,235

inches, while *The Daily Telegraph* with 806 inches — including a piece warning parents that 90 per cent of pop stars smoke marijuana.

Andy Gill they have one of the

most astute commentators, who often spots things others miss," says Wootton.

David Sinclair of *The Times* is

equally well-regarded — "the most

authoritative," in Snow's judgment.

"But *The Times* suffers badly by not

having a dedicated pop section," says Wootton, a view widely echoed, although the diet of live reviews and strong pop features in the magazine are seen as partial compensation.

The Daily Telegraph is the joker in the pack. "They will never understand pop music, so they allow their critics to set their own agendas which

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NEWS

Tighter rules for meat hygiene

■ The Government promised tougher action against rogue abattoirs and failing meat inspectors last night amid allegations that ministers had been warned several times about a "potential timebomb" of declining hygiene standards.

Forty-five hygiene service employees have been disciplined, with three being dismissed, for failing to follow rules aimed at minimising the risk of "mad cow" disease. **Page 1**

Carey supports Palestinian state

■ The Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr George Carey, attacked the right-wing Israeli Government's plans to build a new Jewish settlement in occupied Arab east Jerusalem and backed the idea of a Palestinian state the spiritual leader of the world's 70 million Anglicans echoed the Pope's condemnation last Sunday of plans to build homes for 32,000 Jews. **Pages 1, 10**

Pro-Europe campaign

Almost 100 pro-European MPs, including former 17 Tory ministers, launch fresh assault on Eurosceptic opponents with a strong defence of Britain's membership of the European Union. **Page 1**

Summer blues

The hot, dry summer of 1995 had a huge impact on the economy and our way of life. The number of fires soared; the fertility of pigs and chickens fell; and tourism did not benefit. **Page 7**

Doctor struck off

Patrick Ngosa, 39, the gynaecologist at the centre of an HIV scare involving 1,700 women was struck off by the General Medical Council. **Page 9**

Palace gardens

Such is the state of President Mobutu's prestige these days that hungry Zaireans have planted cassava shrubs in the lawn of his marble palace. **Page 10**

Albania fighting

Residents in the home town of President Berisha broke into stores and swore to defend the President, the first sign that fighting could erupt across Albania's North-South divide. **Page 12**

Yeltsin's knife

President Yeltsin dismissed almost his entire Government, leaving only Viktor Chernomyrdin, the Prime Minister, and his newly appointed first deputy, to draw up a new list. **Page 14**

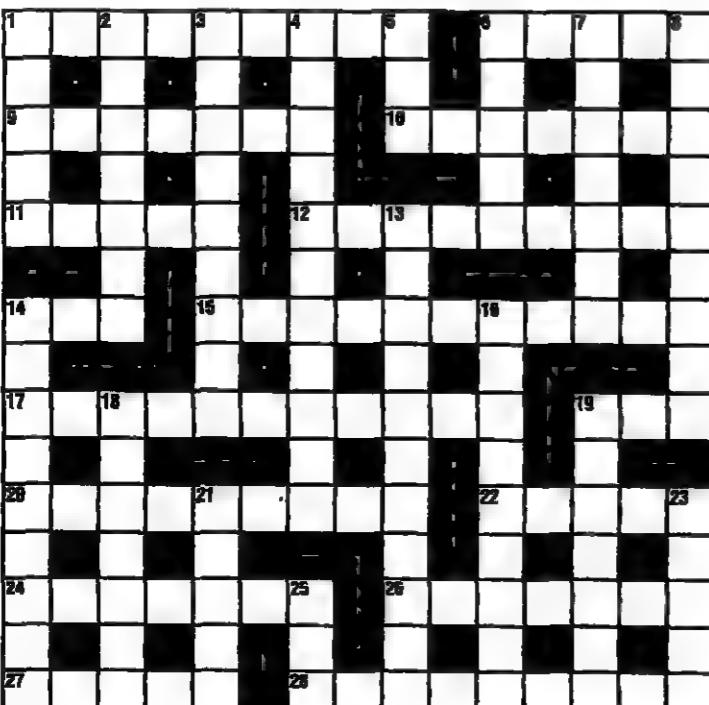
'Bogus' transfer deal

The chairman of Wigan Rugby League Club planned a bogus transfer deal so that he could sue a newspaper for thousands of pounds, a court was told. **Page 5**

Greatest show above Earth

■ Comet Hale-Bopp is providing a brilliant show as one of the best comets of the century, clearly visible round the world in the morning and evening skies. Terry Platt, an amateur astronomer from Bracknell, Berkshire, who photographed the comet at 4am, says that it is easily visible with the naked eye and comparable to the brightest stars. **Page 1**

THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 20,425



ACROSS

1 Bolted many together? (9).
6 Blame one laid on head of Dean Swift (5).
9 Has prep to revise, maybe (7).
10 Pelt American all round the ring - that's sickening (7).
11 He splits a couple of poles made of wood (5).
12 Having no remedy, suffer before getting island retreat (9).
14 Margaret turned to stone (3).
15 Exact monies may be needed for these (6,5).
17 Dictator hated for ill-treatment (5,6).
19 Not happy with some gratuitous advice (3).
20 In love and caring fantastically - it's a sort of chemistry (9).
22 In principle, ring after eleven in the morning (5).
24 One drunk turns to espy another (7).
Solution to Puzzle No 20,424

BEFORE AGRIMONY
A L A A A A M R E
ROOTING REPLICAS
R B R I P I N R
IVORY TOWER LOAN
C S S N M C
ASEPTIC TEAPOTS
D O O E G T
ENVIRON ROLISTER
A Y G S R A
CAGE GOOSISTRAIN
O R A W U R O G
MEANDER ERASURES
B N E S I L C S
EXTENDER GEREFT

26 In entering new trade, one should be (7).
27 For hazardous runs, I hit ball in air (5).
28 The farthest one can get from a bank (9).
DOWN

1 Copies sent up, including one in colour (5).
2 People's leader, such as Lincoln (7).
3 Simple difference of opinion, but he goes to court (9).
4 Honour saint at home, in a manner of speaking (11).
5 Note in sound money (3).
6 Condition under which a horse races (5).
7 Weak case made for charitable collection (4,3).
8 Deal out two of diamonds and two of spades - needs shuffle (9).
13 Agreed about a spiteful woman being involved (11).
14 Ring-fighter is happy to, in the fresh air (9).
16 She might well make man target (9).
18 More than one player is in new boots (7).
19 Elegant French female (7).
21 Traveller has a lot of disconcert on yach (5).
23 Lady in Mother's Union (5).
25 Queen's consort (3).

Times Two Crossword, page 48

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Wall St brokers set \$31bn record

FROM RICHARD THOMSON
IN NEW YORK

SOARING stock markets, mergers and acquisitions and new share issues pushed the revenues of Wall Street's brokerage houses to a record \$31.4 billion in the final quarter of last year.

The total beat the previous record, of \$30.5 billion, set in the second quarter of last year. However, some brokers worry about how long the unprecedented surge could last. "It seems like it's almost too good to be true," said one senior Wall Street executive. "We're praying it isn't the pride before the fall."

Net profits leapt to a record \$11.7 billion, a huge rise of 31 per cent over the previous quarterly profit record of \$8.6 billion, set in 1993.

The figures are compiled by the Securities Industry Association, the US industry trade body. Employment in the securities industry rose to 265,000, a rise of 3.5 per cent on the 1995 level. It has now surpassed the number employed in the industry in the weeks before the stock market crash of October 1987, which is making some Wall Street veterans nervous. "As long as the stock market keeps climbing, we're safe," said one. "After that, it may be every man for himself."

Although initial public share offerings have fallen in volume in recent weeks, the market at the end of last year was running at record levels, with \$50 billion raised in 1996. Merger and acquisition deals also beat all previous records, with more than \$500 billion in completed deals in the year. The pay of senior Wall Street brokers also reached record levels, reflecting the huge profits.

John Mack, president of Morgan Stanley, saw his pay jump 58 per cent to \$10.5 million. Richard Fuld, chairman of Lehman Brothers, had a 34 per cent rise, to \$6.67 million. Merrill Lynch last week said that Daniel Tully, its chairman, was paid \$11.1 million, up 42 per cent.



Hans Snook, left, group managing director, and Graham Howe increased spending at Orange to £220 million

Ring of confidence as Orange losses deepen

BY CHRISTINE BUCKLEY, INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

LOSSES at Orange, the mobile phone operator, deepened to £229 million last year as the company's large investment programme bit further into its balance sheet.

The losses increased from £141 million in 1995, although the figure was largely in line with the City's estimates. Orange's spending grew to £220 million, from £188 million.

But the company, which is not expected to move into the black until next year or 1999, said it was confident about the mobile phone market in the UK, predicting that one in five people will have a portable phone by the year 2000. It currently stands at one in ten.

Orange, which floated last

year, has lifted its market share from 7 per cent to 11.5 per cent.

The company is committed to heavy investment in the race for subscribers in the competitive mobile phone market. While Orange gets £442 a year from its average customer, it has to spend £278 to win a customer. The spend goes on providing the phones at the nominal costs needed to woo new subscribers and on giving incentives to the mobile phone sales networks and shops.

The company is confident that the retained revenue from customers will rise after BT last month raised the price of a call from its fixed line to an

Orange phone. Last year it dipped slightly from 1995's level of £444 per customer.

Although the spend on attracting subscribers is high, Orange says it has been successful in clinging on to those customers.

The mobile phone market is subject to a high level of "churn" — customers who enrol with one provider and then quickly move on to another. Orange said its churn rate for last year was 18.6 per cent compared with an industry average of 28 per cent.

Graham Howe, group finance director, said the churn rate meant that Orange was hanging on to its customers for an average of five years

while the industry average meant its rivals had customer loyalty for about three and a half years.

Beyond the millennium Orange believes ownership of mobile phones could stretch to two in five people. Such a take-up would put the UK further in line with other countries such as the Scandinavian countries, which average 30 per cent ownership.

But fears over what is really to be won in the competitive market has suppressed Orange's shares.

Last March the company floated at 205p a share and then saw a slump in the price to 157p. Yesterday the price moved up 5p to 219p.

Petrol price war takes toll of Frost

BY CARL MORTISHED



James Frost: sites halved

FROST GROUP, the independent petrol retailing group, has seen its petrol retailing chain almost halved in size as a result of the petrol price war. The owner of the Savo petrol brand lost 530 sites last year, reducing the number of outlets to 614 at the end of December.

The cuts in Frost Group, whose chairman is James Frost, coincide with a squeeze on independent dealers as the large oil companies and hypermarkets continue their campaign of low petrol prices. Some 1,500 dealers went bust or quit the market last year, according to figures from the Institute of Petroleum's Retail Marketing Survey.

The vast majority of these are independents, reflecting the hardship faced by small operators.

Frost Group, which publishes its 1996 financial results

next week, adopted a strategy of maintaining its margins in the face of discounting by the majors. It acquired more than 800 dealer sites from Burmah Castrol in June 1995, only months before Esso launched its Pricewatch campaign.

Out of fuel, page 29

Firms unite for software challenge

IN THE most serious challenge yet to Microsoft's dominance of the world software market, several of America's largest computer companies have joined forces to produce a new software standard for computing (Richard Thomson writes).

The companies, which include IBM, Oracle, Sun Microsystems and Netscape Communications, have agreed on specifications that will allow different computers with different software to operate with each other.

The aim is to gain broad industry acceptance of the new standards. This initiative starts with four companies, but our goal is for an industry groundswell to develop, said Steve Mills, general manager of IBM's software division. Widespread acceptance could substantially undermine Microsoft's stranglehold.

The move ends four months of talks between EFM and BCPS, which is managed by Goldman Sachs. The pension fund controlled 32.5 per cent of the fund manager's equity via its 85 per cent stake in the £1 billion British Investment Trust (BIT).

BIT has stood at an average

Insurer forecasts lower prices

BY MARIANNE CURPHEY
INSURANCE CORRESPONDENT

MOTOR insurance rates show no signs of increasing, and new entrants to the direct insurance market will drive prices down, independent insurance said yesterday.

Independent, a general insurer specialising in non-standard risks, said that the industry could be heading for a "second bottom" because a number of direct insurers had still not reached the critical mass necessary to break even.

Michael Bright, independent's chief executive, said: "There are some signs that non-standard motor, including high-risk drivers, is improving, but it is still patchy. The industry has taught the punter to look for the cheapest rates."

Independent yesterday unveiled mixed full-year results. Gross written premiums rose 7 per cent, to £439 million, and pre-tax profit grew 46 per cent, to £52 million (1995: £35.5 million). Excluding realised investment gains, pre-tax profit rose 21 per cent to £40 million (1995: £33 million).

Motor losses doubled to £6 million and the commercial property account deteriorated to a pre-tax loss of £700,000 (1995: profit of £7.9 million).

Underwriting profit for home insurance fell to £1 million, from £5 million in 1995.

Mr Bright said that independent wrote a lot of business for local authorities and had been hit by winter weather.

Commercial liability losses stayed at £2.4 million. However, the affinity group business underwriting profit rose from £900,000 to £5.3 million.

The bulk of group profit came from funded business, as profits from professional indemnity, liability and marine business come through on a three-year basis.

But fears over what is really to be won in the competitive market has suppressed Orange's shares.

Last March the company floated at 205p a share and then saw a slump in the price to 157p. Yesterday the price moved up 5p to 219p.

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

Britton Group beats a dip in demand

BRITTON GROUP, the plastics and packaging group whose customers include Heinz, Kraft and Philip Morris, shrugged off weaker demand and currency fluctuations to lift its pre-tax profits by 5 per cent, to £21.6 million, in the year to December 31. Operating profits on continuing activities rose by 7.3 per cent, to £23.9 million. Exceptional costs of £1.2 million arose largely from restructuring within the plastics division. Britton is paying a final dividend of 1.95p to give a total for the year of 3.3p, up 10 per cent. Earnings per share were 10.8p, up from 10.15p.

Group sales rose by 9 per cent, to £222 million. America is Britton's largest market. Robin Williams, the chief executive, said that the new financial year had shown satisfactory trading, reflecting the benefits of recent capital expenditure and acquisitions, and that further steady growth was expected, subject to more settled foreign exchange conditions.

Lloyd's insolvency test

INVESTORS in the Lloyd's of London insurance market face a new solvency test designed to pinpoint shortfalls at an early stage. Corporate and private names will have to show that they can cover a sum over and above their total liabilities. Lloyd's already has to satisfy two separate solvency tests each year. The DTI said that the new test will show investors how much Lloyd's is relying on its own central fund to maintain solvency. A Lloyd's spokesman said it would not discourage private names.

DBS seeks full listing

DBS MANAGEMENT, Britain's largest network of independent financial advisers, is to reapply for a full Stock Exchange listing after being cleared by the Personal Investment Authority of allegations of compliance breaches made by Kenneth Stead, a former director, in October. DBS is listed on the AIM, with a market capitalisation of £61 million. The company is buying AssureSoft, a computer software provider, for £2 million. DBS said that the acquisition would save costs in developing electronic trading for its 1,650 member firms.

Guinness Peat leaps

GUINNESS PEAT, the merchant bank, reported a 30 per cent increase in net profits to £19.1 million for the year to December. The result reflected the sale of shares in Physicians Insurance to reduce exposure to the US market, as well as settlement of outstanding litigation. The group is to make a one-for-ten bonus share issue in conjunction with a final dividend equivalent to 0.25p per share. The bank is considering proposals to reduce the number of shares in issue and will make a recommendation to shareholders in due course.

Rise in business failures

INSOLVENTIES in Germany grew at more than 15 per cent last year, the fastest rate of increase across Europe, according to Dun & Bradstreet, the business information company. Overall, corporate insolvencies across 14 countries rose 6.5 per cent to 207,000 companies over the year. In Germany, the 25,800 business failures carried with them a total cost to the economy of around DM80 billion, Dun & Bradstreet estimated. Insolvency rates in France and Britain were high, at 64,000 and 41,100 respectively.

Building orders dip

NEW orders in Britain's construction industry fell in January compared with the previous month. Over the three months to January, orders were down 1 per cent compared with the same period a year ago, but 8 per cent up compared with the three months from August to October last year, according to the Department of the Environment. New orders in the private housing sector in the three months from November to January were 13 per cent higher than the previous three months and 40 per cent higher than a year ago.

Schools boost BPP

AN IMPROVED performance by its language schools division helped BPP, the education group, to lift 1996 pre-tax profits 14 per cent, to £9.75 million. Sales rose 15 per cent, to £76 million. Earnings per share rose by 17 per cent, to 22.9p. Profits of the language division, which includes Linguarama, rose by two thirds, to £1.45 million, but Richard Price, chairman, said that UK courses will cost foreign students more if sterling rises higher. A 9p final dividend makes 13p, up 16 per cent.

Cussins raises payout

CUSSINS PROPERTY GROUP, the North East housebuilder, achieved an 11 per cent rise in pre-tax profits to £1.9 million in 1996, despite the absence of a £5 million Ministry of Defence deal that lifted profits in 1995. Turnover rose 9 per cent to £26.7 million, with a 37 per cent leap in housebuilding to £26.1 million and a 28 per cent jump in sales to a record 353 units. Earnings were 8.8p a share (8.7p). The dividend is increased 5 per cent to 4.1p, with a 2.65p final.

Hozelock buys Cyprio

HOZELOCK, the garden products company, has bought Cyprio, a garden pond filtration manufacturer, for £5.8 million. Cyprio was established in 1983 to market a broad range of aquatic products for domestic use. The business, based near Peterborough, has a staff of 50 and markets its clear water filtration systems in Britain, continental Europe and the US. In the year to November 30, 1996 it had sales of £4.7 million and made a pre-tax profit of £621,000.

Sims shows error loss

SIMS FOOD has called in an independent firm of accountants after it uncovered a breakdown of financial controls at its plant in Carnaby, Yorkshire. The company said management accounts may have overstated profits by up to £1.7 million in respect of the year to March 31, 1997, leading to losses of up to £1.5 million. Directors do not expect the group's operating results to differ materially from market expectations. Sims added. The shares fell 2.5p to 30.5p.

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THE PLANET

□ Labour may ditch Oprah chief □ Europe reverses stance on jobs □ Barings 'whistleblower' takes the blame

□ SPLENDID news! Help is at hand for our embattled railways franchising director, who is suffering so grievously at the hands of Stagecoach. Poor John O'Brien, who runs the Office of Passenger Rail Franchising (Opraf) and is charged with ensuring all those tiresome railway timetables are kept to, is widely thought to be one of the first public servants out of a job should Labour win the election.

But Mr O'Brien may be able to stay on after all. What he has to do, and this is radical stuff, be warned, is carry out his obligations as enshrined in the 1993 Railways Act. Easy, really. It might even help those *Times* readers in the South East staring into the mist this morning in the faint hope of spotting a train.

Yesterday this column questioned whether Mr O'Brien lacked the authority to do his job, or was simply not prepared to. Let us assume he is quite keen to give those rail operators whose franchises he has arranged a hard time when they fail. Let us assume he has merely misread the means.

They are to be found in section 55 of the above act. Oprah has so far indicated it will levy fairly low fines for the failings of South West Trains, namely widespread cancellations that will run until Easter at least.

But section 55 offers the

franchising director far more draconian powers. He can make an order requiring them to carry out steps to comply with their duties — retiring all those sacked drivers until their replacements are trained, in South West's case. If this is not done to the letter, fines are unlimited. The sequence continues: loss of the franchise, injunctions from the courts, contempt of court, more fines, jail...

This is a defining moment in rail privatisation, because there are signs that other operators around the country are thinking about their own unilateral amendments to their franchise promises. They must have taken comfort from the self-satisfied bleating we heard from someone called John Watts, apparently the Rail Minister, in the Commons on Monday.

Opraf claims to be aware of section 55, but says there is not enough evidence to say if South West is in breach. The figures are not yet analysed for February; they will not be until the end of next week, that is, nearly April. The operator then has 28 days to comply with any performance

order. Only after that, says Oprah, is there a possibility of fines, if breaches continue. Nothing else we can do.

So you are allowed the best part of three months to run a lousy service, and fines that are not even retrospective. That is how the regulations are configured, says Oprah. Things may be different in future. If Labour gets in, it has said that it views regulation as the heart of its control of the railways — this is made clear in the Railtrack prospectus. By then Mr O'Brien may have made an abrupt career change. Director of regulation at Stagecoach, perhaps?

Contracting out of your responsibilities

□ THOSE who believe the legal mills in Europe grind exceedingly slowly will be surprised to learn that yesterday's ruling on the status of contract workers represents a complete about-face in only three years. The attempt to protect the rights of employees when their jobs are transferred to outside contractors was al-

ways a right too far. Now the EU has managed to retrench and save its energies for more winnable battles, such as the working time directive.

Several German cleaning ladies have trooped through the European Court to help Brussels to clarify its mind on the matter. It had been assumed that if you take on a business, you take on its employees, their rights and the cost of paying them off if you no longer need them. This was a distinct bar to outsourcing, a quaint euphemism for a business that we British are rather good at; indeed, firms such as Capita and Serco Group have made their fortunes from it.

There is only one reason to outsource, putting some of the

work now done in-house in the hands of an outside contractor, and that is to save money. There are really only two ways of doing this. You work people harder or you pay them less — ideally both, if you can get away with it. The real savings come in transferring public sector work, where uneconomic practices are protected by public sector unions, into the private sector.

The European Court judgment significantly weakens the EU's Acquired Rights Directive, by saying new employers are not necessarily required to take on existing staff. Just who they are obliged to take will now have to be clearly defined by both parties and reflected in the price at which the work is put out to tender. It does not strip hundreds of thousands of service workers of their rights. But it could throw up a problem for outsourcing businesses whose contracts come up for renewal.

The EU had to backtrack because its initial stance negated the whole purpose of contracting out in the first place. It had precious little to do with the operation of a single market and

more with knee-jerk regulation setting at Brussels, too. Nor for the first time, and not for the last, one might think.

One law for the bolshie

□ CITY justice seems as subjective in the era of the bureaucratic self-regulatory organisation as in the days of the club blackball. Ian Hopkins, treasury and risk manager at Barings, thinks himself a virtuous whistleblower, who tried to warn top Barings directors of the dangers building up in Singapore, but was sat on for his pains.

Others disagree. Among them is the Securities and Futures Authority, which concluded that Mr Hopkins should have acted faster and more effectively. It is not the first time that a referee has disagreed with a player. What seems odd is that Mr Hopkins should receive as severe an official punishment as anyone at Barings save the incarcerated Nick Leeson. Along with being given a three-year ban from

senior City jobs and a £10,000 charge, he is unusually also named as not being a fit and proper person in SFA terms.

The reason for this appears to be that out of foolish pride, Mr Hopkins refused to co-operate with the SFA investigation of his case. No real transgression incenses petty bureaucrats in professional bodies as much as someone challenging their authority or ignoring their letters.

Had Mr Hopkins coped a plea, he claims, he would have got off with a reprimand and a £5,000 fine. Either investors would have been left unprotected in that event, or Mr Hopkins is now being punished for his pride rather than for any benefit of the financial markets. How interesting to see what penal standard will apply at NatWest.

... No pack drill

□ SPEAKING of NatWest, it was amazing, when a £50 million hole appeared two weeks ago, how quickly senior names who had been preening themselves at the company's results briefing days before dropped below the parapet. It was left to anonymous spokespeople to reassure the market. When NatWest's own internal report is published today or tomorrow, we at least expect some very important people to stand up in public.

Cowie rules out bid for whole of Underground

BY FRASER NELSON

COWIE, the car leasing and bus operating group, yesterday ruled itself out as a bidder for London Underground, but said it may be interested in parts if the network is segmented.

The company, which is already the largest bus operator in the capital, said that the amount of money needed to bid for the Underground as a whole was prohibitive.

Gordon Hodgson, chief executive, said: "We would never bid for the whole system, and would not even give this a second thought. It is much bigger than anything we would want to tackle. But if it were segmented, we might consider it."

His comments came as the company returned pre-tax

profits of £81.2 million last year, a 46 per cent increase on the previous year, after a £30.4 million contribution from its bus operations.

Its four London bus routes increased profits by 49 per cent to £14.9 million over the year, after an increase in margins, bus fares and passenger volume.

However, its car leasing division returned profits of £34.8 million against the expected £37 million, which caused some concern among analysts, who downgraded forecasts for this year from £107 million to £102 million.

Mr Hodgson said that the leasing division was suffering from a "mild depression" because fewer customers had returned cars from the three-

year leases. He said: "It's a cyclical business. There are not as many cars coming back now, but this will correct itself later on." He said the company was adding 9,000 cars to its 74,000-strong fleet this year, and would continue to add as many as cashflow allowed.

Profits at its bus dealership rose 4 per cent to £3.1 million on turnover that was flat at £24.7 million (£24.5 million). Mr Hodgson said the division would not reach "breakthrough point" for another three years, when orders from bus operators would allow the company the purchasing power to command better prices from manufacturers.

The company intends to spend £55 million on about

600 new buses this year, which will take its overall fleet to 7,200. Most of this will be spent on British Bus, bought last August.

Mr Hodgson said the company would continue to pour more money into its new bus routes. "We have three years of heavy spending in front of us," he said. While the acquisition is still being scrutinised by the Department of Trade and Industry, Mr Hodgson said that he was hoping for a result in "weeks rather than months".

Earnings increased to 33.2p (26.2p) a share. The total dividend rises to 12.4p (10.4p), with a final 4p payable on April 25.

Tempus, page 28

Harrison's cautious on outlook

BY ALASDAIR MURRAY

WARD THOMAS, chairman and chief executive of Yorkshire Tynes Television, said yesterday that any bid made by Granada would need to carry a hefty premium to the current share price.

Granada owns 27 per cent of YTTT and Gerry Robinson, chairman, has made no secret of the company's desire to launch a full bid. United News and Media, which has a 14 per cent stake in YTTT, is another potential bidder.

Shares in Yorkshire have risen by around 80 per cent in recent months. They closed unchanged last night at 1,247.5p, valuing the company at £800 million. Mr Thomas believes an offer would need to be pitched at around £17 a share.

YTTT yesterday reported a 40 per cent rise in full-year profits to £30.2 million. Pro-

tiser, while southern regions benefited from strong growth in telecommunications advertising.

The company predicted an improvement this year and has set a target of 10.9 per cent of total revenue, with income growing by 5 per cent in the first quarter.

YTTT is concentrating on expanding its programme making operations. It recently opened a new studio in Leeds, which at 24,000 sq ft is the largest in the country.

Emmerdale was the fastest growing programme in the soap category last year, the show ranking among ITV's top ten, while *A Touch of Frost* and *Heartbeat* were also very successful.

Turnover rose by 3 per cent to £271 million. The total dividend was increased by 29 per cent to 18p. A final dividend of 11.2p is payable on May 13.

Kalon's return to black paints brighter picture

BY CLARE STEWART

KALON, the UK's largest producer of paint, revealed yesterday that its merger with Euridep, the French group, will produce significantly larger benefits than expected. Announcing year-end results, Mike Hennessy, group managing director, said the recurring benefits from merging Kalon and Euridep in 1995 will be £23.5 million in a full year*. This compares with the £10 million expected at the time of the merger.

Integration of the two groups to date has involved closure of offices and plants in the UK and France and a total of 600 job losses. Further restructuring measures are planned in 1997 and substantial reorganisation benefits are still to come through.

Results for the year to December 31 came in at the top end of City forecasts. After exceptional costs, Kalon reported pre-tax profits of £19.3 million, compared with a £3 million loss. Turnover increased 40.3 per cent to £525 million, reflecting a full year's contribution from Euridep.

Analysts have increased their forecast for this year and are looking for pre-tax profits of £46 million. The final dividend is lifted to 3.5p, giving a total of 5.2p for the year.



Mike Hennessy said the merger exceeded expectations

BBA will spend £80m in search of growth

BY ALASDAIR MURRAY

BBA GROUP, the engineering and materials company, has said it will double its investment spend to £80 million this year as it concentrates on organic growth.

The company unveiled a 19 per cent increase in full-year pre-tax profits to £141 million, excluding exceptional items.

Roberto Quarta, chief executive, said that the group is committed to growth through investment in new products and technologies. He added that with an improved balance of businesses, the company is well positioned to benefit from future opportunities.

BBA also announced the purchase of Korma, an Italian materials company, for up to £12 million and the signing of a joint venture friction materials deal in China.

Overall turnover fell 7 per cent to £1.1 billion after a series of disposals. Turnover on continuing operations increased 10 per cent to £1.08 billion.

The transportation division increased profits in continuing businesses by 16 per cent to £8 million. The company said that the benefits of restructuring in the friction materials business should show through this year.

The industrial division increased profits in continuing businesses by a third to £88 million.

Year-end gearing, following capital expenditure of £45 million, was 4 per cent. The total dividend was increased 17 per cent to 7p. A final dividend of 4.9p is payable on May 28.

Tempus, page 28

Sweet performance at Thorntons

A STRONG performance from its new-look stores propelled Thorntons, the chocolate and confectionery retailer, to a 30 per cent rise in profits at the halfway stage (Sarah Cunningham writes).

In the six months to January 31, pre-tax profits rose from

£7.6 million to £9.9 million. Earnings were 30.5 per cent ahead at 9.55p a share.

Like-for-like sales were 13.2 per cent ahead and at its 113 refitted shops, like-for-like sales growth was 25 per cent. Shops that were moved to new sites performed even better.

The company will pay an interim dividend of 1.65p (1.5p) on April 30.

Tempus, page 28

Sheffield United in red

SHEFFIELD UNITED, the quoted first division football club, is "hopeful" of achieving promotion this season — a year earlier than planned. The club, which floated in January via a reverse takeover of Conrad, said yesterday that restructuring benefits should become apparent in the second

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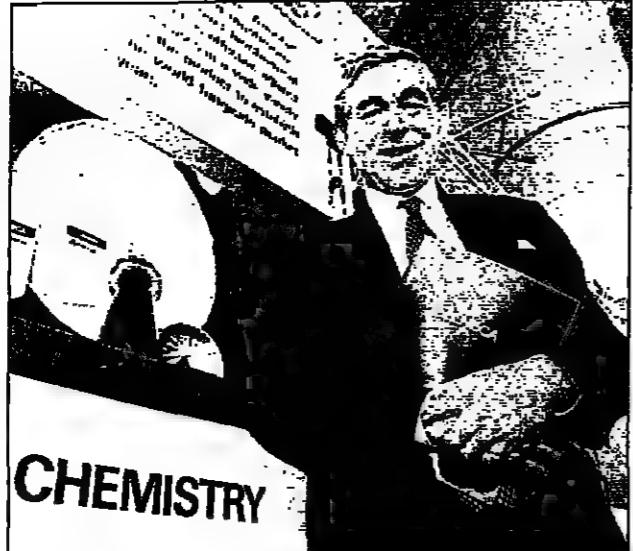
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STOCK MARKET

MICHAEL CLARK



Caird shares jump 90p as talk of bid grows



CHEMISTRY

Sir David Barnes saw shares in Zeneca fall 42p

WHERE there's muck there's brass, the old saying goes. That certainly seems to be the case these days among Britain's fiercely competitive waste disposal companies.

Whispers circulating in the

Square Mile yesterday suggested that a bid may be just round the corner for Caird Group, the land-fill and contaminated waste specialist. It

responded to the speculation with a leap of 90p to a new peak of 782½p. Topping the list of likely suitors is Waste Management International of the US.

Brokers say Waste Management would have to offer at least £12 a share, valuing Caird at £32 million. Caird has had a lean time of it in recent years, coming back from the brink after staggering under debts of almost £22 million. Under the leadership of John Farrell, the group has undergone major restructuring and returned to the dividend list only last year after a three-year absence. Word is that Waste Management, up firmer at 246p, may not be the only bidder in the wings.

The rest of the equity market extended its recent record-breaking run, although the absence of any real follow-through meant that prices closed well below their best of the day.

The annual exodus of brokers and fund managers to Cheltenham meant that interest was on the wane around lunchtime. Even so, the FTSE 100 index closed 6.9 up at a new closing high of 4,444.3, having hit an all-time peak of 4,466.3 earlier in the day. Turnover was a healthy 1.4 billion shares and particularly heavy in the likes of BG (31.97 million shares), down 5p at 164½p, and BTG (31.8 million), up lighter at 283½p.

Full-year figures from Zeneca, where Sir David Barnes is chief executive, failed to impress the City despite profits topping the £1 billion mark for the first time. Brokers who met the company after the results came away decidedly unimpressed with prospects over the next couple of years. They say the development of new drugs is likely to provide a drag on profits. The shares finished 42p lower at 616.60p. By contrast Glaxo Wellcome was being chased higher, with the price climbing 36½p to 611.54. The group has won approval to market

Naratriptan, its new treatment for migraine in Sweden. SmithKline Beecham also benefited from Zeneca's strong performance with a rise of 6p to 946½p, while Medeva added 15p to 329p.

Scotia Holdings, the former high-flyer, came down to earth with a bump. The price touched 325p before ending the day 135p down at 435p. The

high hopes on the group's process for detecting heart conditions in the early stages.

The market is hoping for some positive news from Cortech International today. Along with the figures the group is expected to provide an update on one of its new treatments. Brokers say it could lead to a further boost for the shares, which finished

Note the support for Thistle Hotels, Britain's second largest hotel chain after Granada. The price firmed 3p to 188½p in heavy turnover of 3.27 million shares in the wake of last week's profit numbers. Word is that the group is looking to challenge Granada by lining up a major acquisition.

Medicines Control Agency has told the group it is unable to recommend marketing approval for Taraberic, the group's diabetic neuropathy treatment.

Shield Diagnostics was up and running as the buyers came in again, pushing the price 38p higher at 655p on turnover of 652,981 shares in a 5,000-share market. City speculators are continuing to pin

yesterday down 11p at 225½p.

Reed International was a nervous market, falling 17½p to 111.73p in front of full-year figures today. Brokers are looking for pre-tax profits up around 7 per cent at £879 million and will be hoping for positive news on the sale of its consumer publishing arm.

The high street retailers were depressed after the latest survey from the British Retail

Trade Association showed sales were down for the first time. Brokers who met the company after the results came away decided unimpressed with prospects over the next couple of years. They say the development of new drugs is likely to provide a drag on profits. The shares finished 42p lower at 616.60p.

By contrast Glaxo Wellcome was being chased higher, with the price climbing 36½p to 611.54. The group has won approval to market

Scotia Holdings' shares suffered a setback yesterday.

Source: Datamonitor

FTSE all-share index (rebased)

Mar Apr May Jun Jul Aug Sep Oct Nov Dec Jan Feb Mar

Share price

FTSE all-share index (rebased)

Mar Apr May Jun Jul Aug Sep Oct Nov Dec Jan Feb Mar

Volume

Source: Datamonitor

FTSE all-share index (rebased)

Mar Apr May Jun Jul Aug Sep Oct Nov Dec Jan Feb Mar

Volume

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Mar Apr May Jun Jul Aug Sep Oct Nov Dec Jan Feb Mar

Volume

Source: Datamonitor

FTSE all-share index (rebased)

Mar Apr May Jun Jul Aug Sep Oct Nov Dec Jan Feb



Casualties are rife in the petrol war says Carl Mortished

Expertise at a premium

ANDREW WINCKLER has been touring the streets of Glasgow. The pin-striped chief executive of the SIB was "on the debt" in Govan, mixing with the investing public. Foundations for the flying visit were put in place last year, when Winckler met Ron Baxter, Scottish Legal Life's chief executive, at the Association of Friendly Societies' annual conference in Harrogate. Winckler apparently wanted to see how the insurance business worked at the grass roots level.

Once the tricky problem of what to wear had been overcome, Winckler turned out to be a natural at collecting insurance premiums from Scottish Legal Life customers. "He went down a bomb," I am told. "Chatting, drinking tea, and collecting money. Both staff and customers loved him."

Down to earth

EASYJET AIRLINE has had its wings clipped by the Advertising Standards Authority. A complaint has been upheld against the cut-price airline's regional press advertisement: "Smart Class not club class. London from £29." The advertisement was misleading because Luton was far outside London. The ASA has asked Easyjet to state "London (Luton)" in future. Tut, tut.

OPENING the Lothbury Gallery to the public has left NatWest short of display cabinets. The arrival of around 30 paintings in the lobby of the bank's HQ has left the much-coveted ProShare trophy — awarded for best meeting the needs of private shareholders — without a home. So many trophies.

Humorous sole

THE legend of Nicholas Shipp lives on. The man who helped to transform ten-year-old TT Group into a mini-conglomerate capitalised at £540 million will long be remembered for his cracking one-liners. John Newman, Shipp's partner in business for more than 30 years, recalls the first meeting with senior staff after their purchase of Crystale Holdings. Newman was sitting on a desk talking to the troops, oblivious to the fact that he was sporting one black and one brown shoe, when the chief executive of the US operation turned to Shipp and asked: "Does John always wear odd-coloured shoes?" To which Shipp replied: "He's got another pair exactly like that at home."

THE regulator being given the run-around by South West Trains, owned by Stagecoach, over widespread cancellations on the lines into Waterloo and elsewhere is the Office of Passenger Rail Franchising or OPRF. It was swiftly and cruelly dubbed Riff-Raff in the industry. Now somebody has worked out — whiling away the hours on a station platform, perhaps? — that the Office of et cetera, et cetera is an anagram of "Riff-Raff Asleep in Recognising Chaos".

Timely job offer

TIM SCORE, who yesterday stepped into Nicholas Webster's shoes as finance director at William Baird, shares something in common with his new boss. David Suddens, who took over as chief executive of the textile company almost a year ago, and is busily gathering his own army to prepare for Willy Baird's future, is a fitness fanatic and keen rower. According to Suddens: "The reason I took Tim on was because of his rowing times — his weren't as good as mine. This means I can keep him firmly under my control."

MORAG PRESTON

Small players run out of fuel on the long road to recovery



Prices are forever changing on the forecourt as companies respond to reductions by rivals

in the black. Esso launched its campaign to match the supermarket prices when it realised in 1995 that its market share had fallen from 20 per cent to 16 per cent, largely because of discounting by hypermarkets. That might ring true, except that the facts get in the way. Esso claims its marketing campaign has succeeded in restoring its market share. But whose expense?

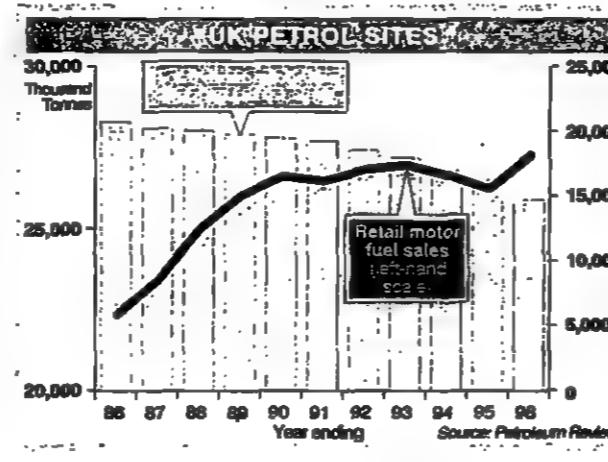
The hypermarkets continue to expand: figures from the Institute of Petroleum's Retail Marketing Survey show that the grocers increased the number of sites that sell petrol by 6.5 per cent in a year in which the total number of petrol retailing sites in the UK fell more than 10 per cent. The contraction in sites is at the expense

of independent dealers — sites owned and managed by private operators who have an agreement with an oil company to supply their brand of petrol. Big oil companies, such as Esso and Shell, have been reducing their independent dealer network. Without huge volumes, independents cannot afford to run at the tight margins imposed by the discounters. The biggest reduction in dealer network last year was at Frost Group — owner of the Save brand —

which saw its chain shrink from 1,144 sites to 614, mainly because of a deliberate strategy of resisting price cuts. Sites owned by independent Save operators fell from 600 to 200.

Frost Group was once the industry discounter. Two years ago, the expansionist Frost acquired Burmah's chain only to see its plans scuppered by Pricewatch. The market turmoil caused Frost to do an about-face, preferring to sacrifice sales to preserve profits. The company has lost about 40 per cent of its volume as a result. James Frost, chairman, clearly believes that Esso's Pricewatch campaign is aimed at independent dealers, not the hypermarkets.

"The majors are selling petrol at a



Source: Petroleum Review

loss but I cannot afford to supply petrol to dealers at a loss." Mr Frost suggests that the big oil companies would not be able to sustain their discounting campaign without the huge upstream earnings from producing crude oil. He points out that Pricewatch has coincided with a high crude price and exceptional upstream profits for the big oil companies. "I have not got any upstream margins to dip into," he says.

Frost will probably survive, largely because of its 400-strong company-owned chain, which produces sufficient volume to support Frost's slimmed-down overheads. However, smaller dealer networks will continue to suffer and could lead to more industry consolidation. Ian Jermyn, analyst at Credit Lyonnais Laing, says that the three-tier structure of the petrol retailing industry could collapse, leading to higher prices.

At the top are the oil majors who traditionally sold petrol at premium prices. In the middle are the independents who discounted from the major's benchmark price and at the bottom are the hypermarkets, selling the cheapest product. Mr Jermyn concludes: "Take out the middle tier and everybody moves up a peg." Consolidation is already in progress, propelled by Pricewatch and the UK's oversupply of gasoline. The country has too many inefficient refineries, a factor which propelled Gulf, Elf and Murco to enter into a tripartite venture to consolidate two refineries at Milford Haven. The GEM merger followed BP and Mobil's decision to combine their downstream businesses in Europe and speculation is rife that weaker players such as Repsol, the Spanish oil group, Q8, owned by Kuwait Petroleum, and UK Petroleum, part of Powell Duffryn, will either merge with a bigger player or shut down their UK operations.

The process could take a long time and will be messy. For the big oil companies, the losses are manageable if the strategy can produce profits in the longer term. Refining complicates the picture: shutting down a refinery and restoring the site could cost hundreds of millions of pounds. Without a retail chain, some oil companies would have little reason to keep their refineries going. In contrast, many independent retailers source their fuel from abroad.

In the end, oil companies will have to recognise that their brands have little significance to UK consumers. The virtual disappearance of Mobil, subsumed by BP, and the decision by Esso to sell petrol on price alone is a step along that road. But it is an expensive journey and the industry could easily lose another billion or two before it recovers.

Albanian factor hovering over pensions poser

Last week, a possible near-term threat to equity markets: trouble in earthquake-prone Japan. This week, a probable long-term promise: the European pensions crisis. It may seem odd to describe a grinding fiscal problem as a promise of wealth, but the logic is clear enough. All the prosperous Continental countries have pension schemes that will become virtually insupportable as the dependency ratio — the number of workers available to support each pension — falls. It is about four and a half at the moment; it will be only a little more than two by 2030. Something has to give.

Existing schemes can only work with higher taxes and lower pensions — both politically intolerable. The modern answer to politically insoluble problems is to privatise them. A Continental switch to personally-owned pension funds, on the British model, seems inevitable. Once complete, this change would generate a flow of new money into the security markets rising to some \$300 billion a year in today's money, or about 4 per cent of the total market capitalisation of the four biggest European economies. Enough, according to Lombard Street Research, to double security prices within a couple of decades.

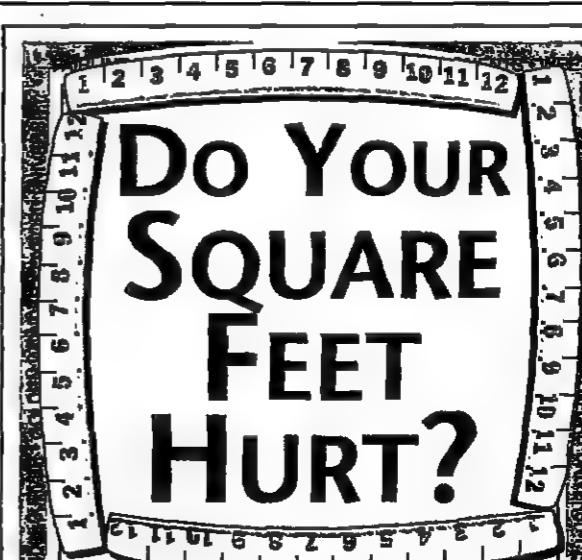
A crippling liability turned, at a stroke, into an asset! It sounds too good to be true, and it is. Critics of pay-as-you-go pensions like to compare them to Albanian pyramid investment schemes: fine if you buy early and cash in early, but ruinous later. What they overlook is that private funded schemes are also potentially Albanian. They add to capital funds as long as they are accumulating; but as the retired draw them down again, funds can be sucked out, and values collapse. These schemes are politically irresistible because they do abolish political responsibility; but they will work economically only if the build-up of funds adds to real wealth, not just paper values.

This is possible, but not proven. It does seem likely that the availability of cheap investment capital has added to growth in high-saving. Pension reform is difficult and unpopular so it needs confident leadership to put it in hand. Thatcher did it, Blair promises to extend it, Kohl could have done it until recently but may have wasted his prestige on EMU. France is a doubtful starter. Chirac seems to prefer the dramatic to the radical. The current Italian coalition looks too fragile to embark on a long-term project.

So even if pensions reform looks inevitable, it is likely to be slow. The Euro cavalry will not ride to the rescue of equity investors for a few years, at best.



ANTHONY HARRIS



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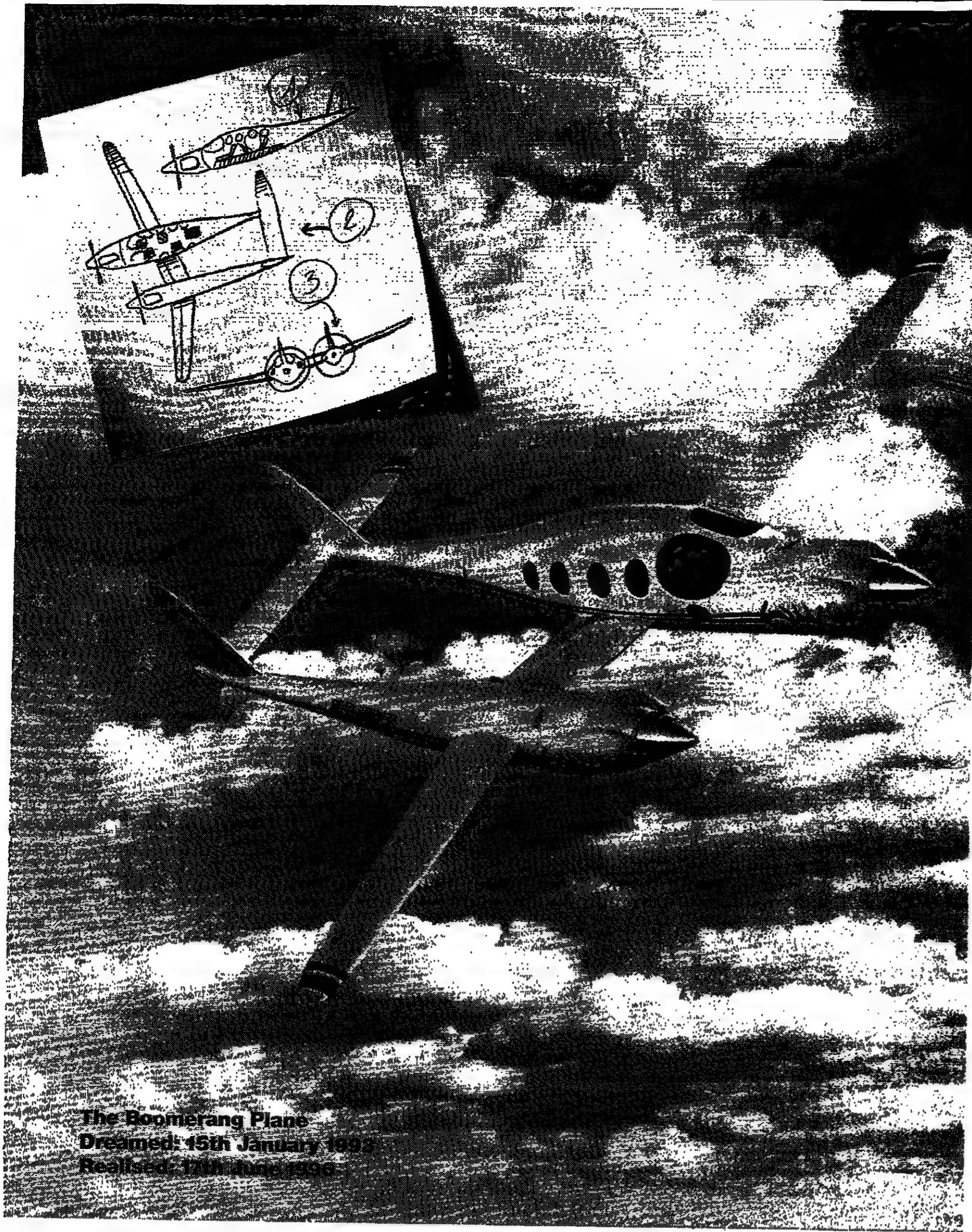
Sir Bryan Carsberg leads the IASC which has ruffled feathers in Britain and America

IOSCO, the international securities exchange body, then has to review the IASC's rules. "People say that process will be perfunctory," said Beresford. "But the chairman of the US Securities and Exchange Commission says there is no deal." Then the SEC has to go through its own process.

The fireworks will then start. The IASC rules will not be identical with the US rules and in most cases, argues Beresford, they will be less stringent. The result will be turbulent arguments among US companies. Analyst organisations have said the IASC rules have to be the same as the US rules for them to be acceptable. The real problems will come not from companies outside the US but from US companies themselves. "Some companies," said Beresford, "will perceive the IASC rules to be more flexible and they will then say if those rules are fine to enable NatWest Bank to list on the New York Stock Exchange then why not Chase Manhattan. US companies will want a level playing field."

For the US authorities, it is a dilemma. Companies are unlikely to take the inconsistencies of the position to its extreme. But Beresford suggested that "for example, General Motors could simply move its offices across the river into Canada and file under IASC rules".

The goals of good financial reporting in the UK may have become simpler in recent years. But the signs are that finance directors looking at overseas listings are going to find it all much more confusing.



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Tideman leaves Australia

FROM RACHEL BRIDGE
IN SYDNEY

CHRIS TIDEMAN, former director of Burton, is heading back home to Britain after unexpectedly resigning as chief executive of David Jones, Australia's upmarket retailer, less than two days before the company is expected to unveil a 50 per cent drop in half-year profits.

His sudden departure follows growing criticism from institutional shareholders about the way he was running the company and in particular his decision to open new stores in suburban areas of Australia, which many feared would take the company downmarket.

Since Mr Tideman took up the job two years ago David Jones has issued four profit warnings. He had hoped to introduce more modern working practices at David Jones.

He was formerly chief executive of Burton's retail arm and began his retailing career at Hepworth, the men's wear chain.

European market and Olympic Games help sportswear groups to healthy results

Disposal puts Pentland into red

BY SARAH CUNNINGHAM



Stephen Rubin, chairman of Pentland group, with models Kate Sexton, left, and Abbie French yesterday

PENTLAND GROUP, the sports and leisurewear group, went into the red last year because of the cost of disposing of its US electrical accessories business.

Operating profits rose 28 per cent to £36 million but exceptional charges of £40.4 million resulted in a pre-tax loss of £3.8 million in the year to the end of December, and a loss per share of 5.25p, the company revealed.

This compares to a pre-tax profit of £32.3 million and earnings per share of 5.29p a year earlier.

Losses on the disposal of Woods Industries cost £32.3 million while £8.1 million was set aside for a writedown of the company's investment in the struggling LA Gear company.

Pentland is looking for a buyer for its last remaining non-core business, which is Holmes Products, a domestic electrical appliance producer.

Pentland had a particularly strong performance from its Speedo, Ellesse and Kickers brands and has record order books in many of its

businesses, it revealed yesterday.

Turnover at Speedo, the swimwear brand, grew 19 per cent, helped by the high-profile of the Aquablade swim-

athletes wearing Speedo, while three of the four world

records set at the Georgia Tech pool in Atlanta were achieved by swimmers wear-

ing Aquablade suits. Sales of

similar

materials, are ahead of expec-

tations, Pentland said.

Profits run well ahead at Adidas

BY A CORRESPONDENT

ADIDAS, the German sportswear manufacturer, achieved a 28 per cent increase in net profits, to DM314 million, last year, on sales that improved 35 per cent, to DM4.7 billion.

The gains were mostly put down to a strong performance in Europe and success in North America and the Asia-Pacific region. European sales rose 33 per cent helped by a strong performance in Britain. The group also enjoyed big sales gains in the Spanish and Swedish markets.

The 1996 dividend is DM1.10 a share, compared with 25 pfennigs in the previous 12 months.

Adidas, which secured a stock market listing in Frankfurt and Paris in November 1995, said sales in the first quarter of the current year had risen 51 per cent over the first three months of last year, to DM995 million.

The company earned a first-quarter profit of DM8 million, compared with DM5 million last time.

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

European markets take Peek higher

PEEK, the traffic management group, lifted pre-tax profits 4 per cent to £12.6 million in 1996. Turnover rose 13 per cent to £162.1 million and earnings increased 4 per cent to 6.9p a share. Traffic control systems account for over three-quarters of group turnover with sales last year rising 14 per cent to £127 million.

Allen Standley, chief executive, said the best performance was seen in the UK and other European markets. Peek has won its first contract in the UK for a traffic enforcement system using digital cameras to detect traffic offences such as speeding and illegal parking. The final dividend is held at 2.35p, making an unchanged total of 3.4p. Mr Standley said US markets last year were "extremely difficult" with increased competition leading to price cutting and lower margins. The company's field data division, which makes measurement kits and rugged portable computers, lifted turnover by 9 per cent to £35 million.

Expamet back in black

EXPAMET International, the supplier of building and industrial products, returned to profit in 1996, earning £16.1 million before tax (£13.3 million loss). The profit included a net £9.5 million surplus from the sale of PAC International and Radiometrics, two electronic security businesses. Restructuring and disposal costs hit 1995 results. Profits before tax and non-recurring items were £7.2 million last year (£6.1 million). Underlying earnings were 7.3p a share (£5.19p). A final dividend of 1.85p a share lifts the total to 3.3p from 3p.

Drug boost for Glaxo

SHARES of Glaxo Wellcome rose 33p to £11.50 after the UK drug company received Swedish Government approval to market naramig, a new treatment for migraine. Naramig has been approved for the acute treatment of the headache phase of migraine attacks with or without aura, Glaxo said, adding that it is the first regulatory approval for naramig. Sweden will now act as the reference member state under the European Commission's mutual recognition procedure.

WSP acquires Graham

WSP HOLDINGS, the consulting engineer, is acquiring Graham Consulting Group, a specialist civil engineering consultancy, for almost £1.6 million in cash and shares. Graham's turnover was £20 million in the nine months to the end of 1996. It has 540 employees in the UK. WSP also reported a 28 per cent rise in pre-tax profits to £2.3 million in 1996 on turnover up 11 per cent to £28.2 million. Earnings rose 15 per cent to 5.4p a share. The total dividend increased 9 per cent to 2.4p a share with a 1.3p final.

Lang approves deals

IAN LANG, the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, said he has decided not to refer the proposed acquisition by Dana Corporation of Ingersoll-Rand Clark Huth's business to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission. He has also cleared the proposed acquisition by NT Acquisition on behalf of Ingersoll-Rand of Newman Tonks. The Government has also cleared the proposed Thermo Instrument acquisition of Life Sciences International.

BAA in Bali bid

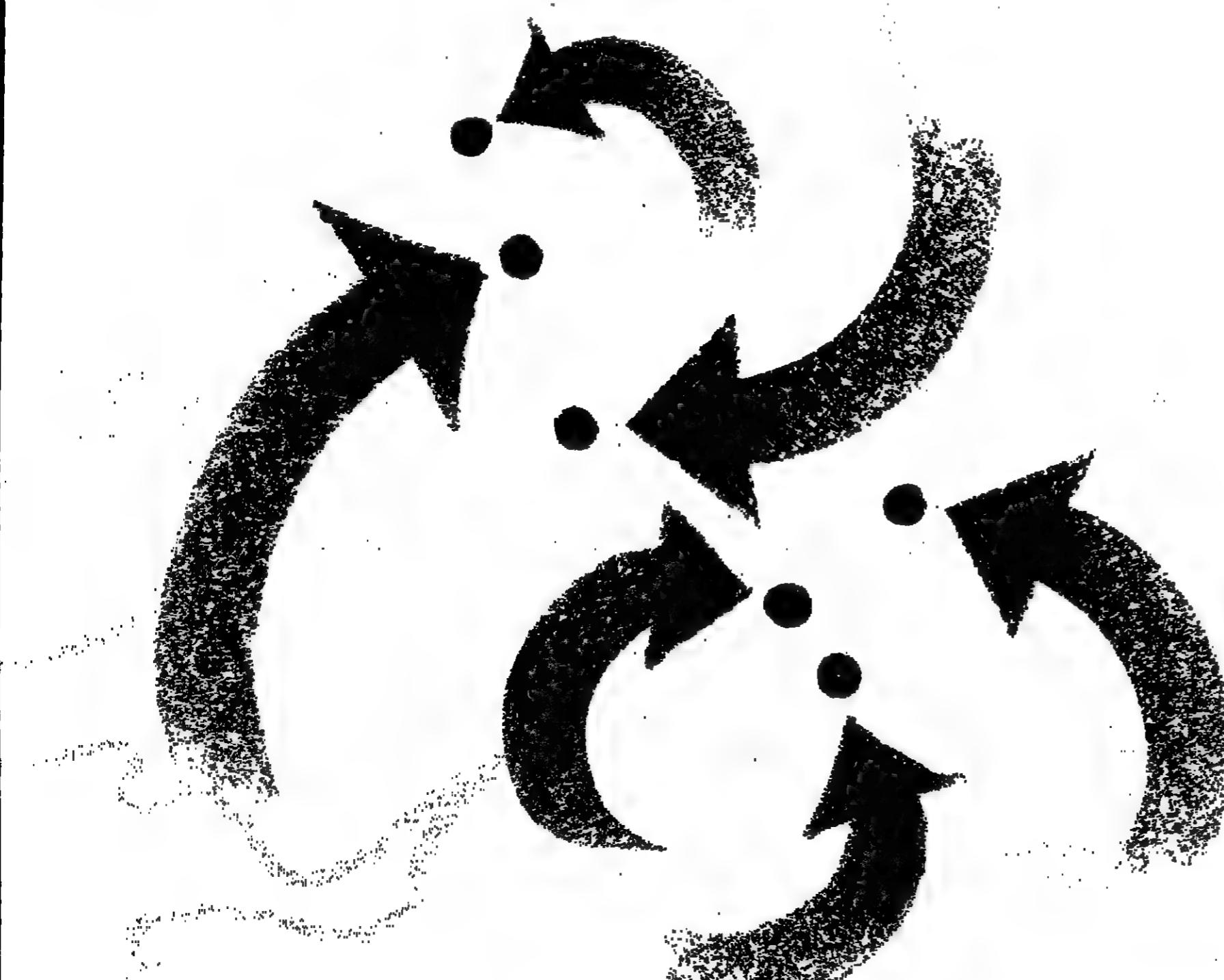
BAA, the UK airport operator, is expected to secure a contract to operate and manage Bali airport in Indonesia. In a consortium with AMP, the Australian fund manager, and Axiom, will take a 30 per cent stake in the airport for US\$50 million in return for a 20-year contract to operate and manage both the international and domestic terminals. The Indonesian Government will retain the remaining 70 per cent share. BAA is the only operator bidding for the contract.

Write-off hits VHE

SHARES in VHE Holdings fell 15p to 80p after the building and construction company said that pre-tax profits in the £1.2 million write-off for costs incurred in an unsuccessful attempt to gain Government approval for a landfill site in South Yorkshire. The company said ordinary trading was satisfactory and operating profits to March 31, excluding this write-off, remain in line with expectations.

B&WA discusses sale

SHARES in Barr & Wallace Arnold Trust, the motor distribution and leisure and holidays group, rose from 238p to 255p after the company said that it was in talks to sell its leisure division. The announcement had been made in the light of recent share price movements and a further announcement would be made in due course. The leisure division made £3.2 million in the year to December 31, 1995, on sales of £63 million, about one quarter of total turnover.



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THE TIMES UNIT TRUST INFORMATION SERVICE

How Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch's classic *True to the Small* is the small

■ FILM

The legacy of *Star Wars*: how the movies got bigger and louder thanks to the sci-fi blockbuster



■ THEATRE

The sensitive new play *Waking* finds the Soho Theatre Company back where it belongs, in the heart of Soho



Joyce 150

■ OFFER

See Simon Callow star as Oscar Wilde in a new West End staging, courtesy of *The Times* Theatre Club



■ TOMORROW

Director Anthony Minghella's screen adaptation of *The English Patient* finally reaches Britain

Twenty years on, as Luke, Han and cute little R2-D2 return to our cinemas, Geoff Brown assesses the *Star Wars* legacy

The force is with you, again

Twenty years ago, Woody Allen and Diane Keaton were wrestling with lobsters on the kitchen floor in *Annie Hall*. John Travolta gyrated his way into audience's hearts in *Saturday Night Fever*. Buñuel made his last film, *That Obscure Object of Desire*, and Ridley Scott made his first, *The Duellists*. But one film looms above them all from 1977. It is *Star Wars*, George Lucas's tale of galactic civil war: and a film shortly to loom large again following its release in a "special edition", gleaming with several minutes of extra footage, a digitally remastered soundtrack, and some new special effects.

It was the spring of 1977 when Americans first encountered farm boy Luke Skywalker, two chatty robots, and a mercenary pilot called Han Solo, who helped to free Princess Leia's planet from the grip of the evil Empire forces. "Outstanding adventure-fantasy," said the trade paper *Variety*. "All-age appeal. Huge outlook."

Huge indeed: the film is now in the *Variety* hall of fame as the fourth-highest earner in movie history. Adjustment for inflation would probably place it at No. 2, below *Gone with the Wind*. But the success and importance of *Star Wars* is not simply a matter of box-office grosses. Nor is it a matter of the accumulated merchandise, from late 1970s T-shirts to the latest CD-Roms, or the volume of fans who have made Luke Skywalker, the villainous Darth Vader, or the

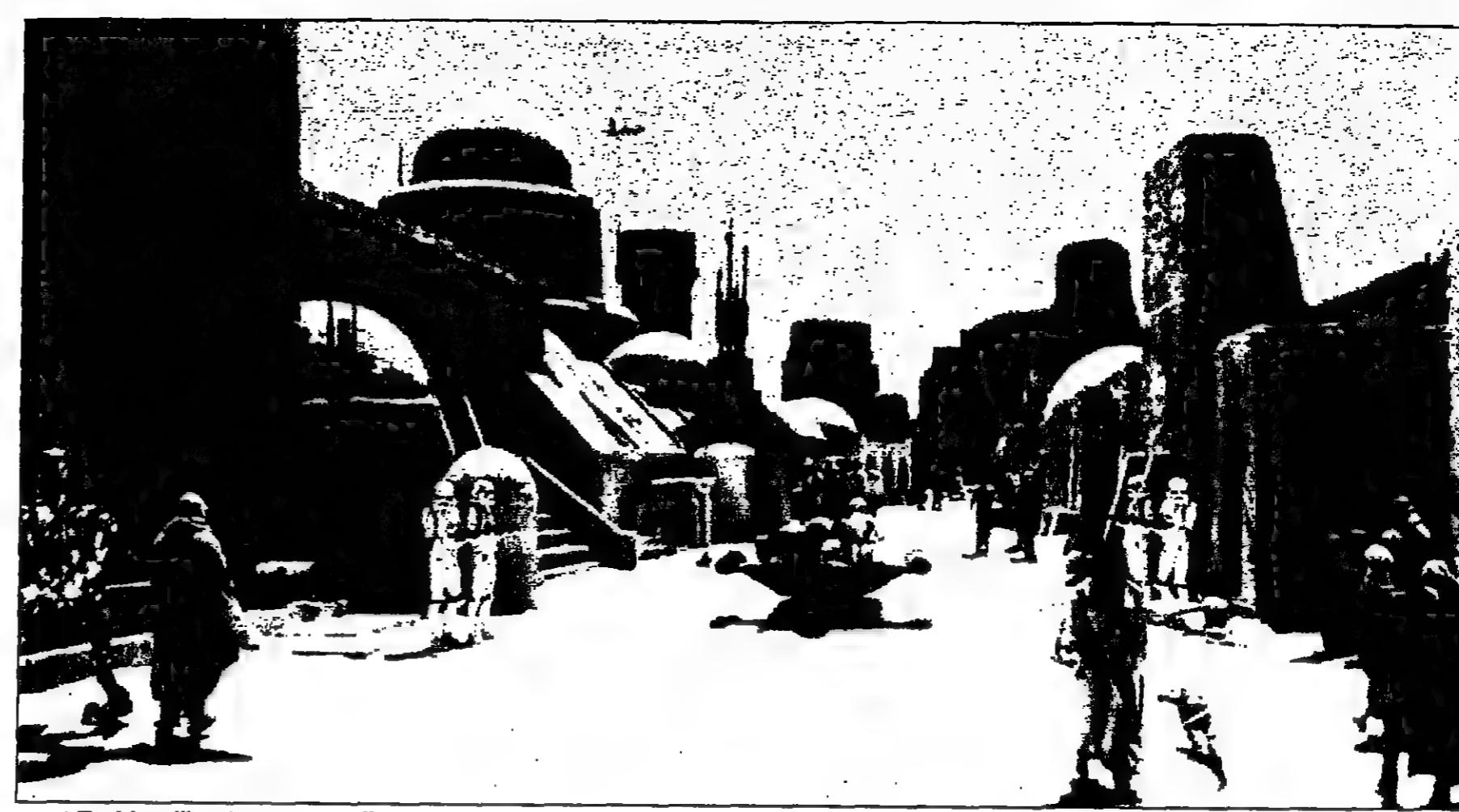
saintly Ben Obi-Wan Kenobi their lifelong friends. Many films, after all, generate sequels and intense devotion, and earn huge piles of money, but *Star Wars* changed the shape of cinema.

To put it bluntly, after *Star Wars* movies became larger, louder, more artificial and less adult. True, in the 1970s popular cinema was already retreating from intimacy and moving towards awesome spectacle rigorously geared towards the widest possible audience. Aircraft, skyscrapers, ocean liners and Hollywood has-beens had been sabotaged, upturned, or burnt to a crisp in *The Towering Inferno*, *The Poseidon Adventure* and the *Airport* movies. Then, in 1975, *Jaws* raised its head, giving viewers the quakes as a shark chomped up the supporting cast of

the New England coast. Cinema as a mass entertainment was fighting its way back after being clobbered for decades by television.

But already there was a difference. The *Airport* brand of disaster movie was crafted by old-timers such as Irwin Allen, whose every thought was a cliché. *Jaws* was a young man's movie (its director, Steven Spielberg, was 27). The film was impish and self-aware, consciously playing with thriller traditions and the audience's feelings. George Lucas continued the "movie-brat" tendency by creating in *Star Wars* a lavish homage to Saturday morning serials, *Flash Gordon*, especially, mixed in with elements

After it, movies became larger, louder and less adult?



A Tunisian village becomes the raffish outpost of Mos Eisley in *Star Wars*, the film by George Lucas that changed the course of cinema — for good and bad

from westerns, the adventure writings of Edgar Rice Burroughs, and even Arthurian legend. At the time of shooting, Lucas was all of 32. To judge by his imagination, however, he was knocking on 12.

Star Wars firmly established the pattern of modern blockbuster cinema. Its legacy is everywhere. The kind of antics once filmed cheaply, aimed at children, and shoved into serials or B-movies with a rough, crazy charm of their own are now presented in a hugely elaborate form, puffed up with self-importance and the latest Hollywood technology.

Twenty years ago, some critics commented that such endeavours tended to produce big, empty movies lacking any reverberations. The critic Pauline Kael termed *Star Wars* "an assemblage of spare parts... an epic without a dream".

But it was not *Star Wars* alone

that is now more true than ever. But over time our senses have become so deadened, our expectations so shrivelled, that too few audiences, critics or film-makers notice.

Within a few years of *Star Wars*, cinemas were swamped with all kinds of intergalactic and superhuman adventures. That same year, 1977, Spielberg offered *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*, a science-fiction epic that bucked the trend and did have a dream, and an intelligence. In 1978, mild-mannered Clark Kent became Superman again. Then, in 1981, Spielberg and Lucas generated a new action hero, Indiana Jones, played by Harrison Ford, the pilot from *Star Wars*: although nothing was really new about *Raiders of the Lost Ark* and its sequels.

Skywalker Sound is another *Star Wars* offspring, enhancing mixing facilities for movie soundtracks, enabling the grandiose music of John Williams to make itself heard above screams, shrieks and exploding planets. The next step was to

ensure that theatres had equipment suited to convey such sonic bombardment: hence the THX sound system, inaugurated in 1983 in the second *Star Wars* sequel, *The Return of the Jedi*.

Laser beam battles, monolithic vessels creeping through the black night of space: *Star Wars* and ILM made their creation look so effortless. The latest technology has only increased the ease with which fantasies can be realised and, in the *Star Wars* special edition, Lucas has reworked some scenes to take advantage of the new finesse.

Computer technology is also lowering the cost of generating each visual effect. But budgets are not declining as a result: Hollywood is simply cramming more and more startling sights into movies to keep the audience transfixed.

There is another kind of price to

pay for special effects-driven cinema: human beings lose out. The plot loses out. A film becomes a catalogue of visual stunts, edited for immediate impact. All was not lost in *Star Wars*, which still placed characters in the foreground, and spent considerable time on the cross-talking robots, R2-D2 and C-3PO, and the tug of loyalties between the humans.

But you can read the future in this film, for good and bad. A synthetic popular cinema that is super-efficient and knowing, but lacks the soul and imagination to generate true wonder. A cinema mistrustful of intelligence, afraid of quietness. A cinema of perpetual adolescence.

• *Star Wars* opens on March 21. Special editions of *The Empire Strikes Back* and *Return of the Jedi* follow next month

Sins of the father and the son

The building at 21 Dean Street used to be a synagogue above which, I'm told, there were rooms where people played whilst. Now there are temporary stalls where the male worshippers once sat, a balcony where the women were segregated, and, no doubt, dressing rooms where ageing card-players sedately trumped each other.

Thanks to a grant from the lottery, the synagogue is in the process of being turned into a permanent theatre for one of our most enduring fringe companies. Several years after it moved from W1 to Lisson Grove, the Soho Theatre Company is back where it belongs, in the tatty old heart of Soho itself.

I wish I could be more than 60 or 70 per cent enthusiastic about the opening production that Soho's artistic director, Abigail Morris, is staging in its new home. Lin Coughlan, who can create a strongish character and turn a sharpish line, is clearly the sort of dramatist the company exists to encourage. But *Waking* is one of those father-and-son dramas, more often found in America than here, which tend to get summed up as sensitive: meaning that it gently ruffles the mind but does

■ THEATRE

Waking
21 Dean Street

not seize the heart or fill the stomach.

It might almost be a Martin McDonagh play with the black comedy extracted. Like his *Cripple of Inishmaan*, it is set in the extreme west of Ireland, and, like his *Beauty Queen of Leenane*, it is about a parent and child deeply at odds. Steve Nicolson's Michael is bringing his 13-year-old son, Brian (Lee Turnbull), from England on a duty visit to his father, Sean (James Greene).

Certainly, Michael's one-note hostility would come

The old man is a stonemason, a trade that allows Tom Piper to litter an Irish counterpart of the American back porch with cemetery sculpture and he seems a pleasant enough codger. But Michael, a macho sailor lately invalided out of the Royal Navy with a shattered leg, can barely speak to him, so embittered is he by the vaguely evoked sins Sean committed years ago.

MARILYN KINGWELL

intolerable were it not for the former nun from next door. Sarah is not a deeply explained or explored character, either, but she is finely acted by Nicola Redmond and she introduces some much-needed variety into the evening.

She also gives the first a quizzily old-fashioned curtain-line. Enter Michael, who has been searching a cupboard for a hurley stick: "It's piled high with Sarah's clothes. How long have you two been living together?" Shock, horror — or rather, mild, minor surprise.

I had better not reveal the ending, except to say that it is preceded by a longish vigil beside Sean's deathbed and that, when Michael complains that dying is just another of the old boy's strategies for getting attention, he does not 100 per cent mean it.

Is or isn't there one of those reconciliation scenes mandatory in American father-and-son back-porch plays? Does or doesn't sentiment or sentimentality find its way onstage? I wish Coughlan had made me care more about the answers to those questions.

BENEDICT NORTINGALE



One-note hostility from Steve Nicolson's Michael, and some much-needed variety from Nicola Redmond as Sarah

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How much money has Comic Relief raised in its five previous Red Nose Days?
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All proceeds from the line will go to Comic Relief. Normal TNL competition rules apply.

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THE TIMES

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CHANGING TIMES

Susan MacDonald looks at the changing scale of secretarial salaries and ponders where they are headed

How much should a secretary earn?

The Gordon Yates recruitment consultancy, in conjunction with *The Times*, has produced its ninth annual Admin, Secretarial and Support Staff Salary Report. Its data, published last week, on salaries, bonuses, benefits and work patterns for the 1996-97 survey gives a clear picture of how secretaries and support staff are faring and what the future holds. The information comes from confidential questionnaires sent out to 516 companies, employing a total of 224,000 staff, across the UK. It shows that:

- Salaries have increased year on year by 3 per cent. The average salary for central London is £16,965, for outer London £15,383 and throughout the rest of Britain £14,376. Central London therefore pays 10.3 per cent more than outer London, and outer London pays 7 per cent more than the rest of Britain.
- Bonuses are offered by 47.5 per cent of companies. The average bonus adds an extra 6.82 per cent to salary. However, the vast majority of bonuses are not guaranteed.
- Almost 20 per cent of companies offer season ticket loans and health insurance. Other benefits offered

The average bonus adds 6.82 per cent to salary*

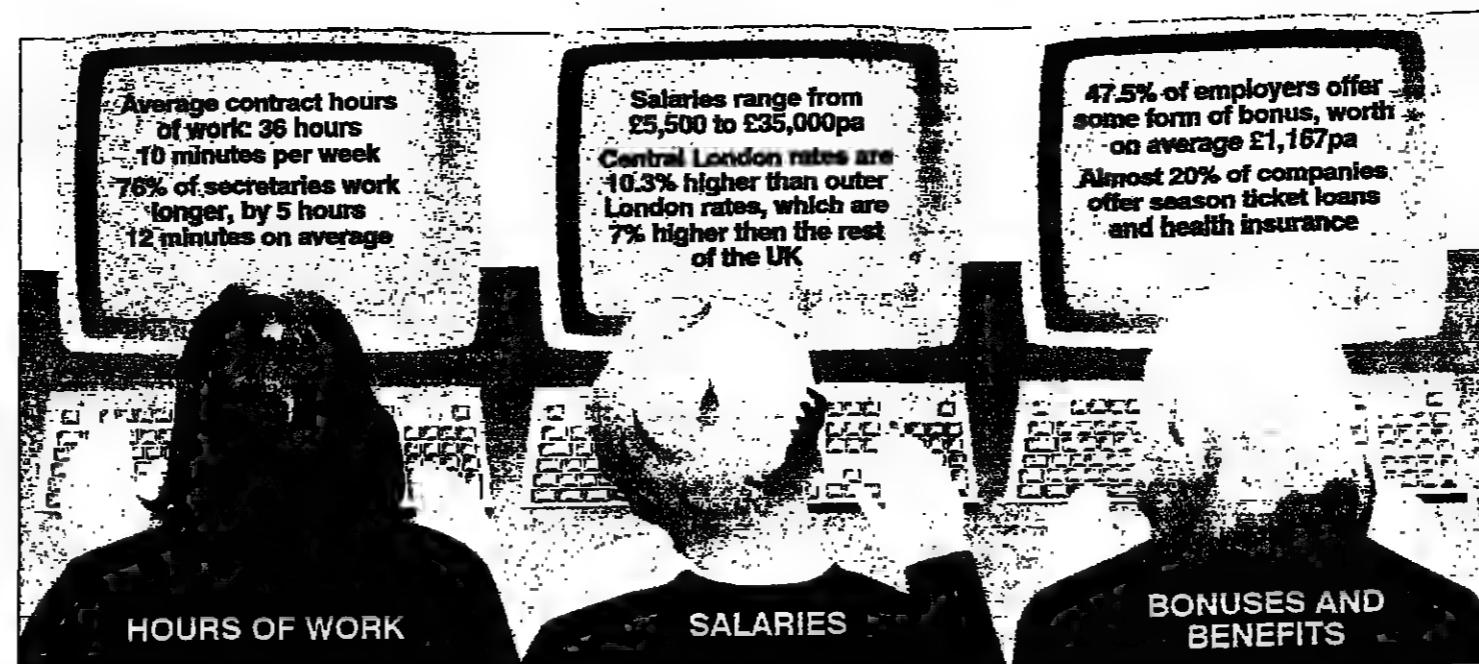
include pensions, private health insurance, subsidised or paid lunches, profit-related pay, or discounts on own goods or services. Head offices offer the greatest number of benefits, the architects' sector (including quantity surveyors, structural engineers and commercial interior design) generally offers the fewest.

□ The average number of contract hours a week is 36 hours 10 minutes, but 76 per cent of staff have to work longer, by a reported average of 5 hours, 12 minutes. Of those 76 per cent of companies only 14 per cent reported paying overtime. The principal ways of doing this were time-and-a-half, fixed remuneration and time off in lieu.

□ The majority of companies, 87 per cent, conduct yearly salary reviews. Three per cent hold reviews twice yearly, 3.2 per cent hold irregular reviews and 6.8 per cent of companies either do not have reviews or did not respond.

□ Head offices offer the highest average salaries, at £19,864. Publishing (including newspapers, magazines, books) offers the lowest average at £15,781.

□ The accountancy sector appears to entice the longest average length of service, with 5.1 years. Advertising



HOURS OF WORK

SALARIES

BONUSES AND BENEFITS

ing attracts the shortest length, with two years eight months.

□ Almost two in three companies invest in training for support staff. Average budgeted amount for this is £847 for each employee.

□ Almost 90 per cent of company executives now do at least some of their own typing.

□ More than a third of companies continue to hold language skills to be of "no importance".

According to Richard Grace, of Gordon Yates, the average salary increase of 3 per cent — not far above the rate of inflation — shows that companies are still wary of sticking their necks out on higher salaries. They fear that a future downturn in their business might land them with salary levels they could not afford to maintain.

However, Mr Grace says, while companies may be becoming

meaner over pay rises, there has been a significant leap in the number of discretionary-based bonuses that they are paying out — and at often substantial figures.

A junior secretary could be given an average bonus of £580 a year while a chairman's PA could be awarded an average £1,167. This system allows companies to award a form of pay rise in deserving staff while keeping the option of pulling

in their horns should the good times turn bad.

There has been an increase, Mr Grace says, in three, six and nine-month contracts, but the vast majority of secretaries and support staff are still in permanent jobs, although their roles are changing. The one-to-one boss-secretary relationship is rare now. Flexibility and the ability to work within a team is all important.

The word secretary is becoming a misnomer. Companies are not looking for 60 words a minute, they are looking for support staff who are client-focused and have presentation skills," Mr Grace says. "But, even in the talking PC, where executives can dictate to a computer rather than a secretary, should not be seen as the death knell for the profession. There is an exciting future for those who are proactive and creative."

One area where there has been little significant change over the years covers the need for language skills. Fifteen per cent of companies in this report said that language skills were of considerable benefit. 85 per cent felt they were of little or no importance.

So, closer co-operation in Europe appears to have made little difference to the attitudes of companies towards languages. But the need for bilingual and trilingual secretarial and support staff is growing yearly, especially among the increasing numbers of foreign companies who are based in the UK, where secretaries with such skills can command high salaries.

There is little change, too, in which newspapers are used by companies to advertise secretarial and support staff vacancies. *The Times* continues to be the favourite choice with 48 per cent of respondents using it.

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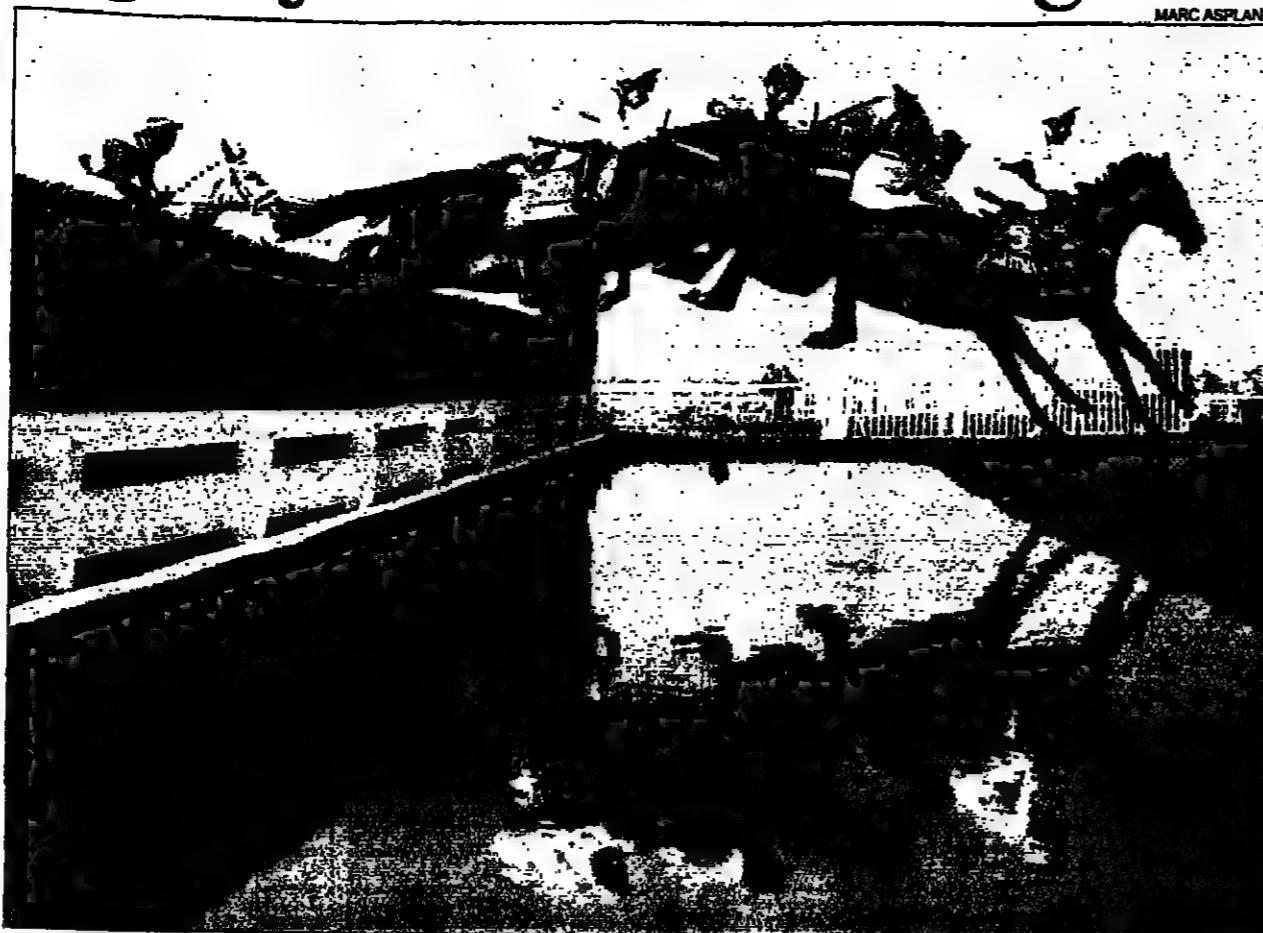
'I'm sure my appreciation of the race will increase if and when I win it'

Pinning my faith in Viking Flagship

RICHARD DUNWOODY



Chases an elusive big-race success



Mulligan and Dunwoody, who parted company at the fifth fence, lead over the water jump in the Arkle Chase yesterday

The Queen Mother Champion Chase is probably the least celebrated of Cheltenham's three jewels. The hurdlers had their day yesterday while Gold Cup horses will dominate the stage tomorrow. Yet for many professionals in the sport, the Champion Chase today has no equal. It is all about quality jumping at real speed over two miles, the minimum trip in jumps racing.

I'm sure my appreciation of the race will increase if and when I ever win it. I have been runner-up on three occasions and finished third as many times, often in close finishes. It is one of the major races missing from my collection and I can hardly ask for a better ride than Viking Flagship to end my personal drought.

Viking Flagship's jumping is usually reliable, as tough as they come and he thrives on the end-to-end gallop of this race. His record in it

is far better than mine — he has won it twice and chased home Klarion Davis 12 months ago, when my mount, Sound Man, finished third. Some argue that, aged ten, Viking Flagship has a fair few miles on the clock. Against that, he has again put up some very good performances for David Nicholson this season.

It's funny the little things which people notice in the heat of a championship race. Until recently his jockey's white cap

had a habit of flying off during his races. I told people used to bet among themselves at what stage the cap would come loose, but Adrian Maguire's valet has somehow got it to stay on. Having replaced Adrian, I'll be instructing my valet, Andy Townend, to make sure the white cap sticks. I'm telling you this so that if you get involved in any side bet, you'll know who to blame if it goes wrong.

When riding Viking Flag-

ship, I'll be keeping a close watch on Klarion Davis. This horse makes mistakes but he has won at the last two Festivals — although I will never know how he managed it last year. I was half a length ahead of him approaching a fence and could see him from the corner of my eye. After we jumped it Klarion Davis completely disappeared from my field of vision. Simultaneously, I heard the sound of his legs clattering into the boards at

the bottom of the fence and thought we'd be seeing no more of him. I couldn't believe it when he rejoined us in the closing stages, travelling better than any of us and clearly bound for victory. He has a formidable trainer in Arthur Moore, who will have him spot on for this.

Viking Flagship finished fourth behind Ask Tom, another fancied contender, at Kempton in January but my mount has much better off at

weights this time. Ask Tom has improved but he needs to do so again in this league. Martha's Son has a lot of class, something that applies to Strong Promise, a six-year-old novice of tremendous potential. I know all about him — he beat me aboard One Man at Ascot last month and will be a tough opponent.

Nevertheless, Viking Flagship loves the cut and thrust of this event. He had a very easy race last time and that should have done him the power of good. He is also a thick-winded horse, which probably explains why his form improves throughout the year. I know him well, having ridden him several times in his career, and he loves the sort of battle he will be involved in today.

As for the other races, I can pass on an interesting snippet when I followed Fred Husby, the amateur rider, up the gallops at David Nicholson's last week. He was riding Mighty Moss, his mount in the SunAlliance Novices' Hurdle, and he told me to get a good look at his backside as I'd be seeing plenty more of in today's race. Until then I thought Agistment, my own mount, had a decent each-way chance against the likes of Istabraq, Red Blazer and Royaljuno — but Fred is obviously confident.

Of my remaining rides, I'll highlight Hanakham, who has as good a chance as any in the Royal SunAlliance Chase. He ran particularly well against Coome Hill last time and that is solid form. Florida Pearl (Bumper) and Pashto (Mildmay Of Fete) have reasonable prospects. But then, don't they all this week?

Strong Promise can complete rise to the top

GUIDE TO THE FESTIVAL TODAY

2.00 Istabraq is the Irish "banker" of the meeting, but I was far from impressed with his hurdling when he won narrowly from stablemate Finnegan's Hollow at Leopardstown last month.

The Aidan O'Brien-trained favourite is in the form choice, but given his likely short odds and suspect hurdling bigger-priced rivals are preferred. Red Blazer won at Worcester in December before defying a penalty at Leicester. The form of that race has worked out superbly with four well beaten rivals having won since. However, because of the drying ground I marginally prefer Agistment, whose only defeat came in the hot Festival bumper last year when he finished sixth. Jimmy Fitzgerald's progressive runner has equally good form and should relish this stiff track. Royaljuno should not be far away.

2.35 Klarion Davis can be an indifferent jummer but Arthur Moore has the knack of getting him right for Cheltenham. The winner of this race last year, he showed he was back to his best when making most to win at

RICHARD EVANS

Nap: AGISTMENT (2.00 Cheltenham)
Next best: Executive Design (3.15 Cheltenham)

Richard Evans and Thunder selected Or Royal (11-1) at the Cheltenham Festival yesterday.

4.30 It is difficult to assess the form of Francois Doumen's French raider, Vol Pari Nuit. On his only start in this country, he jumped particularly well when beating moderate opposition at Fontwell over 3½ miles. However, his shrewd trainer had no hesitation nominating this race and, at Market Rasen, but it could pay to take a chance with Parahandy. A winner of two Irish points last year, he has produced respectable efforts in better class races (behind Cyborgo last time) and should relish this trip.

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5.50 Navan last month. If his puts in a clear round he will take some beating. Viking Flagship is arguably in the form of his career but is best on easy ground over this trip. Strong Promise, who floored One Man at Ascot, is the most progressive horse in the field and loves this track and fast ground.

3.15 This is the toughest race of the week to crack. Copper Boy had been my ante-post choice but the drying ground may not suit, a remark which also applies to Supreme Lady and Big Strand. Mandys Mantino's early season form gives him a chance but he has been chasing and my shortlist concerns Tullymurry Toff, unbeaten in his last five starts, and Direct Route, who, with Executive Design, should appreciate this longer trip. Mary Revey has few runners at this meeting but this one looks well treated having won at Ascot before an unlucky seventh at the Ladbrooke.

RICHARD EVANS

5.05 47TH YEAR OF THE MILDAY OF FETE CHALLENGE CUP (HANDICAP CHASE) (C20/04: 2m 4f 110yd) (16 runners)

FORM FOCUS

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RICHARD EVANS

5.40 No end of runners are fancied in this "bumper", including Florida Pearl, whose trainer, Willie Mullins, landed this race last year, Dawn Leader, Mr Markham, and Samuel Wilsden. Mr Lurpuk, from the Mary Revey yard, is a tentative choice.

RICHARD EVANS

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2/1 Klarion Davis 12/1 Martha's Son 16/1 Arctic Kinsman 16/1 Lord Dorset 11/2 Ask Tom 11/2 Martha's Son 16/1

FORM FOCUS

5.40 WEATHERBYS CHAMPION BUMPER (National Hunt race, grade 1: £18,750: 2m 110yd) (25 runners)

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Rob Hughes says post-Keegan Newcastle must be judged on results

Defeat robs Dalglish of his only defence

The act of the supporter who, just before half-time in a compelling FA Carling Premiership match at Anfield on Monday, appeared to throw his replica black-and-white striped shirt into the face of Kenny Dalglish, came preciously close to symbolising what many are feeling: that Dalglish has been in too much haste to take the joy out of Newcastle United's football.

One must be careful not to conclude, certainly not to encourage, supporters to break from their enclosures and throw things at players or managers, yet it is easy to understand this youth, with his team three goals down, with Liverpool having bombarded the Newcastle goal with 15 shots and with United in such cautious, negative mood that they had not contributed a solitary attempt at goal, nor even a corner.

The only justification that Dalglish would have for tearing up Kevin Keegan's "Gordie Charter", for dulling the attacking brio and seeking to stifle the movement and imagination out of the game, would be for him to win matches that Keegan might have lost. Instead, Newcastle's impetus in the league, and possibly in the UEFA Cup, is faltering, while a team built excessively on going forward is reprogrammed, trying to be something it is not in terms of defensive solidarity.

To be fair, Keegan effectively acknowledged by his resignation at the start of the year that he had lost the plot of trying to balance attack with defence. That balance, so es-

ential to any football team, would require new recruits if it were to be effective.

Instead of attempting to swing the pendulum through 180 degrees, surely Dalglish should have gone with the flow, trying to tighten things up while acknowledging that the players he inherited are basically cavaliers whose comprehension of defence was to score more often than they conceded.

This was Keegan's essential pact with the people of Tyneside, with tens of thousands of supporters such as the one who overstepped the mark on Monday.

Dalglish, in his dry, Scottish delivery, was quite witty when he observed: "He must have thought I was a registered player and wanted me to go on." Fair enough, humour takes the sting out of an emotive situation, but it does not excuse Dalglish rushing to convert the people's team into a team that dulls the palate for the game, that attempts to lure the opposition forward before perhaps striking when it grows weary. It would be like asking performers from the Barnum and Bailey Circus to play Hamlet.

Of course, something had to be done about Newcastle's square back four, the vulnerability of the unaware Darren Peacock and the seemingly uninterested Philippe Albert, whose real instincts are not to be a defender at all. Come the summer, when, maybe, Dalglish will be one of those trying to tempt Slaven Bilic to break his contract with West Ham United, then he might



Fowler's dramatic late winner at Anfield exposed shortcomings in the Newcastle United defence

construct the foundations of a real defence.

Meanwhile, though it may now be too late for the title, Dalglish would be better advised to liberate the talents he inherited, talents built to win 4-3 rather than lose that way.

What was more remarkable was to see Liverpool, after two barren performances, jolted into almost astonishing slackness that very nearly gave the game, and the hard-won advantage, away. That it should be Jamie Redknapp, the first-half creator of two of the goals with visionary passes, who began giving the ball away to Newcastle, beggared belief.

One had watched Liverpool at their peak, and thought perhaps that the triumvirate of Redknapp, Steve McManaman and Robbie Fowler was made for England. The pity is that the wing backs, those modern creatures coveted by

Glenn Hoddle, the England coach, happen in Liverpool's case to be Jason McAteer, who plays on Ireland's right flank, and Stig Inge Bjornebye, who is Norwegian.

The greater pity, from Newcastle's viewpoint, was that when Bjornebye so precisely flighted the ball in from the left, the disorder in Newcastle's rearguard was such that Peacock, off 2in, Albert, off 3in, and Shaka Hislop, off 6in, all stood immobile, watching Fowler leap above Robbie Elliott, the smallest man in their defence, to head the winner.

It was the 108th goal in 179 appearances by Fowler ... and only the eighteenth time that this man of 5ft 11in has used his head to finish off the opposition. It might be the goal that puts the championship beyond Newcastle, and delivers hope to Merseyside.

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Dalglish is in danger of alienating supporters by abandoning his team's commitment to attack

Smith issues rallying call to his troops

Robson warns Middlesbrough to beware surprise

BY DAVID MADDOCK

WALTER SMITH issued a rallying call to his Rangers shadow squad yesterday ahead of two matches in five days that may decide their season.

They play Dundee United at Ibrox tonight and meet Celtic at Parkhead on Sunday, a crucial fixture in their pursuit of a ninth successive league championship.

Ibrox is in danger of resembling a casualty ward, with a growing list of leading internationals struck down by injuries with eight matches left of their league programme.

Smith, however, set aside the medical bulletins to urge those who will face Dundee United to make amends for an uncharacteristically flat performance in the 2-0 Scottish Cup defeat by Celtic last Thursday.

"There is a big push required from everyone here and we hope we can go on and win another championship," Smith said. "I hope I will get a reaction after the Celtic match. After going out of the cup, the title is the sole objective for now. We must lift our game to compensate."

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He was encouraged by the form of Anil Kumble, the leg spinner, who took eight wickets in the match, after having little success in South Africa.

A big gain for the West Indies was the performance of the locally-born fast bowler, Franklyn Rose, who took seven wickets on his debut and upstaged his more illustrious partner with a performance which brought him the man-of-the-match award.

"He bowled very, very well. He was penetrative and did exactly what was asked of him," Courtney Walsh, the West Indies captain, said. "It was a dream start, a great debut for him."

West Indies may be without Ian Bishop for the second Test, which begins in Port of Spain, Trinidad on Friday. Bishop left the field on Monday complaining of a pain in his right leg. Port of Spain is the scene of India's only two Test victories in the Caribbean while West Indies have won their last three matches on the ground.

ONE assumes that Bryan Robson will be playing the National Lottery with a heightened sense of anticipation over the next few weeks. It is a game of luck, after all, and Robson seems over-endowed in that department at present.

That his struggling Middlesbrough team somehow managed to muddle through the earlier rounds of both leading cup competitions to reach the semi-finals, to be greeted there by Stockport County and Chesterfield, both of the Nationwide League second division, is fortune bordering on the insane. It is against such a background that Middlesbrough enter the second leg of their

Coca-Cola Cup semi-final against Stockport County tonight and Robson knows only too well that he must guard against the natural feeling that his side's passage into the finals of both this competition and the FA Cup is ordained.

With a two-goal lead already from the away leg two weeks ago, such humility will not be easy, especially after two impressive performances against Derby County in the last week. The manager is mindful, however, of Stockport's success on their travels this season.

They won at Blackburn Rovers and Southampton on their way to the semi-final and that is enough of a warning to my players," he said. "If we are complacent, then I know they

possess the spirit to punish us. They have played extremely well against three Premiership sides in this competition and their performance at Southampton in particular was impressive.

"They went a goal down, but scored two in reply. We must approach this tie as if we have merely taken the lead — and now we must ensure that we don't let Stockport back in, as both West Ham and Southampton did."

Middlesbrough have Juninho, the Brazil midfield player, back for the second leg, after returning from the international duty that deprived them of his services for the first game. They should also have Emerson back after his recovery from an

ankle injury that precluded his involvement in the FA Cup victory over Derby last Saturday.

The importance of the game tonight to Juninho cannot be overstated. "I am very keen to play at Wembley, but more importantly, I want to get into Europe with Middlesbrough," he said. "We have the chance to do that in both cup competitions, but the Coca-Cola Cup is still the least complicated route, because we have a lead over Stockport from the first leg."

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BUSA CHAMPIONSHIPS: Final: Men's Doubles: 7. Hendo-Watt 2. Women's Doubles: 7. Teesdale 2.

BASKETBALL

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION (NBA): LA Clippers 112 East 104.

BOWLS

BALLYMENA: Northern Ireland: British indoor championships: Singles: Steven M. Brooks (Eng) 1st M. Barlow (Eng) 2nd. 10. Marshall (Scot) 3rd Price (Wales) 4th.

HOOTON: 9. H. Marshall 2. C. Price 3. H. Jones 4. D. Peacock 5. D. C. Jones 6. D. C. Jones 7. D. C. Jones 8. D. C. Jones 9. D. C. Jones 10. D. C. Jones 11. D. C. Jones 12. D. C. Jones 13. D. C. Jones 14. D. C. Jones 15. D. C. Jones 16. D. C. Jones 17. D. C. Jones 18. D. C. Jones 19. D. C. Jones 20. D. C. Jones 21. D. C. Jones 22. D. C. Jones 23. D. C. Jones 24. D. C. Jones 25. D. C. Jones 26. D. C. Jones 27. D. C. Jones 28. D. C. Jones 29. D. C. Jones 30. D. C. Jones 31. D. C. Jones 32. D. C. Jones 33. D. C. Jones 34. D. C. Jones 35. D. C. Jones 36. D. C. Jones 37. D. C. Jones 38. D. C. Jones 39. D. C. Jones 40. D. C. Jones 41. D. C. Jones 42. D. C. Jones 43. D. C. Jones 44. D. C. Jones 45. D. C. Jones 46. D. C. Jones 47. D. C. Jones 48. D. C. Jones 49. D. C. Jones 50. D. C. Jones 51. D. C. Jones 52. D. C. Jones 53. D. C. Jones 54. D. C. Jones 55. D. C. Jones 56. D. C. Jones 57. D. C. Jones 58. D. C. Jones 59. D. C. Jones 60. D. C. Jones 61. D. C. Jones 62. D. C. Jones 63. D. C. 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An uncompromising legend of Welsh sport

Wilf Wooller, who died yesterday aged 84, earned a legendary status in the annals of Welsh sport. He was a great Wales rugby player and was an immense presence for 40 years as a player and an administrator — and for most of that time a presiding spirit — for Glamorgan County Cricket Club.

He was of a kind which we are unlikely to see again. Born with a keen eye for the flight and tumble of a ball of any shape or size he was, given the age in which he lived, able to practise his gifts and to perform at first-class level without hesitation or interruption. He was from a Corinthian mould. Rugby, cricket, football and squash all came within his

ambit. Nowadays, at a time of increasing specialisation, a player finding that he is talented in a variety of sports would be forced to choose which path to follow and to concentrate single-mindedly upon it.

Compromise was not a word, either as a player or, later, as a trenchant commentator, that entered Wooller's vocabulary. He was unquestionably single-minded, some would say stubborn, and one dare not contemplate the answer he might have given if anyone had the gall to suggest to him that, really, he ought to choose one sport ahead of another. Once he had made up his mind he would brook no argument. Thus he moved seamlessly from playing rug-

Gerald Davies pays tribute to the great Wilf Wooller, a colossus of cricket and rugby union in the Principality

by for Cardiff and Wales — he was capped 18 times — in the winter, to playing cricket for his beloved Glamorgan, whom he led to the county championship in 1948, in the summer.

He loved sport with a passion. If he was Corinthian, his mood was not carefree. There was a tough edge to him. His kind of sportsmanship embraced a keen degree of gamesmanship or brinkmanship, call it what you will, which to some eyes, brought

— for instance, in favour of retaining contact with apartheid-ridden South Africa — but he always listened carefully to what others had to say. If others disagreed with him, then he only wished them to respect his view.

In fact, he thrived on others standing up to him. The intense competition on the field could happily extend to the hot debate in the bar, the radio studio or in his newspaper columns. This was sport by another means. Wooller was opinionated but this served to add to the colour, tension and the vigour of his conversation. He had to be true to himself.

He was an extraordinary man. To sit next to him in the

press box watching, say, Cardiff play Llanelli, was to delight in his running commentary on a game. What one heard was not necessarily about the immediate action, but a record of the sequence of play, the personalities and humour of a match played between the same two clubs some half a century ago. He loved to reminisce, but never about the horrendous experiences which he shared with his great Cardiff friend, the late Les Spence, as a prisoner of war in the Far East. That was forbidden territory, best left buried. In that sense, also, he was a unique presence and a remarkable man.

Obituary, page 21

CRICKET

Sussex chairman outlines case against revolution

BY SIMON WILDE

KEN HOPKINS, the new chairman of Sussex, attempted to draw a line under the club's troubles yesterday by arguing that he was the man to take the county forward, beyond the forthcoming and potentially divisive annual and extraordinary meetings.

The 63-year-old had few words of comfort for Alan Wells, the dismissed captain, or for the younger generation — not confined to those involved in Sussex — who believe cricket management should reside with those closer to the game and modern business.

At an early morning press conference at Hove, Hopkins outlined his views, most of them responses to criticisms from Tony Pigott, a former player who is demanding the resignation of the entire committee. Hopkins stressed his business experience (a marketing career with Seaboard) and that he has never been a 'yes man' in 13 years on the committee. 'I intend to make my views known,' he said.

Pigott, 38, wants places on the board for himself and men such as Don Trangmarie, a director of Marks and Spencer who has invested money in the young players at the club, and Roger Dakin, who has a background in public relations, but Hopkins says Pigott's actions are unnecessary and ill-timed. 'I have no idea what his plans are but I am prepared to meet him,' Hopkins said. 'I'm ready for a fight.'

Hopkins's predecessor,

Alan Caffyn, resigned last week after a member of the committee, Richard Barrow, accused it of being "inward looking", a charge that the new chairman rejected. Hopkins also reiterated Caffyn's criticisms of Wells, which so incensed Pigott and Martin Speight, who left last month to join Durham.

'Alan Wells did not motivate the players to win,' he said. 'He expected everyone else to play to the same standard as himself. He lost confidence in them and they lost confidence in him. There was a lack of respect. The young players have an opportunity now and I am confident they will rise to the challenge under Peter Moores.'

Pigott's plans have been welcomed by Nick Cook, the former England bowler and Northamptonshire second XI coach, who believes that all county clubs must be run by him. 'He expected everyone else to play to the same standard as himself. He lost confidence in them and they lost confidence in him. There was a lack of respect. The young players have an opportunity now and I am confident they will rise to the challenge under Peter Moores.'

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Sussex hope that Hopkins's appointment will deter the normally conservative Sussex members from agreeing to Pigott's call for further resignations, but the state of departures this winter is believed to have angered many.

■ Brian Close, the former England captain, resigned yesterday from Yorkshire's cricket committee in favour of a place on the public relations committee. 'I will be able to express myself more freely,' he said.

Cairns, 27, will go into hospital at the end of the Test series against Sri Lanka. He is playing as a batsman after being unable to bowl in the last two Tests of the recent series against England.

Nottinghamshire have told Cairns that he will not be needed this season if they can find a replacement, although he has told the county that he expects to be able to bowl at some stage during the season.

Mark Arthur, the Nottinghamshire spokesman, said: 'Chris said he was not sure how long the operation would take to heal and there was a strong possibility that he may not be able to bowl until June or July. We expect to resolve the situation within the next two weeks.'

Oxford dominated the first 15 minutes during which three short corners were earned and two shots from

Brett were well stopped by Piotrowicz. Cambridge's first attack of consequence was broken up by Griffiths, before Bateman fired wide. Playfair earned Cambridge their first short corner in the 31st minute and a save by Crofts led to a scramble during which Oxford conceded a penalty stroke for stick obstruction. Mayer made no mistake from the spot, placing the ball high into the net.

Oxford mounted considerable pressure in the second half but gained no advantage from a sequence of short corners, struck by Wilcock.

Cambridge, inspired by Bateman, beat off several attacks and eventually broke free in the last minute to earn a short corner which Mervin converted after a well worked move.

John Cadman, in his last year as Cambridge coach, said: 'It was a fantastic finish and for me there could have

been no better ending. The lads did exactly what I told them to do.'

This was the 97th meeting between the two teams and Cambridge are ahead by 45

points.

OXFORD: C Crofts (King's Bruton and St Catherine's), T Griffiths (Whitgift and Kettle), J McCormick (Aycliffe GS), N Edder, M Bell (St Edmund's), N NZ and New College, J Pritchard, D Rasmussen (St George's), S. St Catherine's, D Edwards (King's and Lincoln), B Cope (Bedford and Eaton), G. Batten (Oulton Hall), J. Matthews (Hills Road VI Form College) and St Edmund Hall, D Edwards (Epsom and Ewell), D. D. Edwards (Epsom and Ewell), R Wilcock (Manchester GS) and B. Cope (Oulton Hall and Worcester), J. Hodges (Norwich and Queen's).

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CAMBRIDGE: P. Pritchard

No reason to panic: you are not a clone

When Dolly the cloned sheep took over the front pages as a novel change from Dolly the mad cow, there was a rush to reassure us that cloning humans was illegal as well as unthinkable and, anyway, there were scientific reasons why cloning Saddam Hussein, for example, would be impossible.

Unfortunately these assumptions are not all that comforting, if the distinguished line-up assembled last night for *Network First: All in the Genes* (ITV) is to be believed. In the course of the programme somebody mentioned Frankenstein, as one knew they would, but this particular evocation of a fictional extravagance had some point to it.

Like Frankenstein, most scientists are neither malevolent nor mad. He, and they, set out to advance mankind but there is always the possibility that the work of science will take on a life of

its own. Genes, by their very nature, have an independent streak. Most of the scientists on show for this absorbing and sober documentary took the view that because all genes are altered by the environment in which they develop, it would be impossible to clone Saddam. By the time you knew you wanted to do it, it would be too late; he would already be an adult and therefore unlike the foetal Saddam you were trying to replicate.

Yet we also heard that our new friend Dolly was cloned from a "mature" sheep, therefore if Dolly is an exact replica of her genetic source, the scientists who produced Dolly have already answered the question of whether a gene altered by maturity can be copied in its mature form. The answer is yes.

The other startling factor raised in the film had to do with City speculators "investing" in genes. Apparently the scientists who created

Dolly have applied to patent their procedure, which I suppose is fair enough. But what about the fact that others are patenting individual genes, just in case they turn out to be a nice little earner, sorry, a source of human enlightenment?

If this starts to look like a privatised gene pool, with having enough money the only condition for being allowed to dive in, rest panic: cloning pyrants and selling genes on the London commodities market are far from the core issues in genealogy. *Network First* was movingly correct in talking to real families with children stricken by inherited diseases: how far should science be allowed to go in removing or altering genes? This is the million-pound question. It offers no glib answers but it does require mature public debate.

The transatlantic trade in com-

REVIEW



Peter Barnard

many a long year, with what might be called mixed results. *Mad About You* is an American sitcom, still in the ratings over there and running on satellite over here, which now gains a British version called *Loved By You* (ITV). If the original is half-decent, it is a lot better than *Loved By You*.

The stars are John Gordon Sinclair and Trevyn McDowell as a couple who have been married

for five months and find that the sexual spark has dimmed. The series is apparently about their attempts to rekindle it, though the idea was straining my attention halfway through one episode.

Several stereotypes familiar from no more than 5,000 other series drift in and out of the action: a dull married couple, a boorish bloke, a fretting sister. I wrote down one funny line, when McDowell leaves a window open so that the dog can breathe and Sinclair says: "It's a flat, not a Volvo."

What has happened to television sitcom? With a couple of exceptions, the BBC seems to have given up looking for new ideas in favour of repeats while the commercial companies plough such a narrow contextual furrow that one is left gasping at its sheer ordinariness.

Timewatch, BBC2's history series, has never been short of plaudits and it is presently at the peak of its powers. Last night's

Secret Memories, the story of the Special Operations Executive in the Second World War was made thoroughly absorbing by the usual *Timewatch* qualities: attention to detail and meticulous research.

The men and women who blew up railway lines and otherwise made life difficult for the Nazis are genuine heroes, a truth made the more obvious last night by the matter-of-fact style of those who survived. They were loners in an alien landscape, which is a frightening enough condition even if you are not caught.

Tony Brooks spent the war in lodgings near Lyons, organising the sabotage of transport, mainly railways. Local help was at first unwilling, but it became more enthusiastic when Brooks set fuses so that trains would be derailed after the engine had passed, thus saving the lives of the French crew.

Small things brought big re-

sults. Brooks recalled an operative known as Pegleg, who would change the waybills on goods wagons so that acid meant for the batteries in U-boats would end up, uselessly, at an army barracks while submarine engineers wondered why they had been sent carburettor parts.

Brian Stonehouse was also at Lyons as a radio operator and *Timewatch* reunited him with the owner of a chateau from which he had sent vital intelligence and where he was later captured and sent to a concentration camp. He survived, as did a woman agent whose tasks included planting exploding rats in the corners of factories and putting itching powder in German underwear.

Eisenhower said that in France alone the Resistance had been the equivalent of five extra divisions. These were, and are, magnificent people, a better argument for cloning than Dolly the sheep.

BBC1

6.00am *Business Breakfast* (53015)
7.00 BBC Breakfast News (7) (41183)
9.00 Breakfast News Extra (1) (5243270)
9.20 Style Challenge (4057947)
9.45 *Kilroy* (4270812)
10.30 *Can't Cook, Won't Cook* (93473)
11.00 *News* (7) and *weather* (6203909)
11.05 *The Really Useful Show* (7815638)
11.35 *Change That* (8483270)
12.00 *News* (7) and *weather* (7357638)
12.05pm *The Alphabet Game* (5381541)
12.30 *Going for a Song* (5668909)
12.55 *The Weather Show* (7972247)
1.00 *One O'Clock News* (7) (44270)
1.30 *Regional News* (83409218)
1.40 *Neighbours*: A love-struck Steve tries to win Dannii's affections (7) (11786725)
2.05 *Police Rescue*: Angel puts his neck on the line for an old friend who's fallen on hard times (2254638)
2.55 *As Time Goes By* (7) (5021947)
3.25 *Well Worth a Visit* (1008724)
3.30 *Playdays* (5261545) 3.50 *Chucklevision* (527218) 4.10 *Pop Eye* and *Son* (1257744) 4.35 *The Wild House* (5255631)
5.00 *Newsworld* (7) (3562034)
5.10 *Blue Peter* (7) (5080555)
5.35 *Neighbours* (7) (503639)
6.00 *One O'Clock News* (947)
6.30 *Regional News* (299)
7.00 *Neef's Telly Years* (1964) (8164)
7.30 *Tomorrow's World*: Shahnaz Pakravan meets a group of prostitutes in Nairobi who have been sold by scientists by remaining HIV-negative despite repeated exposure to the virus — could their seemingly natural resistance help to create a vaccine? Plus: Howard Staleford encounters a comical computer programmed to crack jokes (7) (183)
8.00 *The National Lottery Live*: Music by the Backstreet Boys and a report from Jill Dando on how Lottery money is helping research into heart disease (521947)
8.15 *25 Years of the Two Ronnies* (7) (317218)
8.50 *Points of View* (789034)
9.00 *Nine O'Clock News* (5299)
9.29 *National Lottery Update* (942102)
9.30 *Insiders*: Tension erupts when new arrival to Viceroy Jonathan Mason lets slip crucial information about Colin's daughter, leaving him in a state of shock and on the verge of a breakdown as he tries to come to terms with the revelation. With Julia Ford (961299).
10.20 *Comic Relief*: Walk on by Lenny Henry sees how money donated to Comic Relief helps the homeless, going behind the scenes at The London Connection (3014270)
11.25 *Femme Fatale* (1991): Erotic thriller, starring Colin Firth. Directed by Andre Guttmann (384367).
12.55 *am Crazy from the Heart* (1991): With Christine Lahti and Ruben Blades. Directed by Thomas Schlamme (7) (5035023).
2.25 *Weather* (2847752)

BBC2

6.00am *Open University*: *Edison — the Invention of Invention* (5310265) 6.50 *Lighten Mechanisms* (9020371) 7.15 *Scalp* *Heart Breakers* (7912725) 7.30 *Carrie, the Caver and the Teen Angels* (8953367) 7.55 *Record Breakers* (Gold) (1) (3226541) 8.00 *Top Truck* (6361821) 8.25 *Spot* (6084056) 8.35 *The Record* (591725)

9.00 *Jeunes Francophones* (4585725) 9.25 *See Me, Set Me* (505047) 9.45 *Words and Pictures* (7034183) 10.00 *Playdays* (36763) 10.30 *Numberplate* (7056528) 10.45 *Go for It* (7053183) 11.00 *Around Scotland* (2494194) 11.20 *Music Makers* (9131912) 11.45 *Young People in Action* (6019368) 12.00 *Spanish Gitarre* (7348980) 12.05 *History* (File) (5898183) 12.30 *Working Life* (19909) 1.00 *The Geography Programme* (47506299) 1.20 *Thunderbirds in French* (68810164) 1.25 *Zig Zag* (7518034) 1.45 *Come Outside* (6883637) 2.00 *Teddy Trucks* (7233551) 2.05 *Spot* (27334812) 2.10 *Everyone's Got One* (2277589) 3.00 *News* (7) (6882013) 3.45 *News* (7) (6110096)

4.00 *Today's the Day* (8) 4.20 *Ready, Steady, Cook* (116) 5.00 *Esther* (9270) 5.30 *Seniors Pot Luck* (676)

6.00 *Star Trek: The Next Generation* (7) (91862) 6.45 *Trev and Simon's Transmission Impossible* (456588)

7.00 *Hancock* (b/w) (7) (9034)

7.30 *Coriolanus*: *Understanding the Monster*

Ray Wyre presents a thought-provoking argument for the reform of the legal system which he says fails to protect children from sex abusers (7) (725)

8.00 *University Challenge* (7) (5454)

8.30 *Changing Rooms* (7) (4588)

9.00 *Modern Times: Jewish Wedding*

BBC2, 9.00pm

The twist in Stephen Walker's film about the nuptials of Michaela and Steve is that she is Jewish and he is not. For the knot to be tied, he agrees to convert to the faith. This involves not only giving up his favourite bacon and being circumcised but having to face half an hour of tough questioning by a Jewish court. Walker is himself a Jew and while milking the subject for its passages of humour he is never irreverent. Much of the footage is posed, with the leading characters doing set pieces before the camera, but the mixture of stylisation and those spontaneous moments that no film-maker can plan for is surprisingly effective. Those unfamiliar with a Jewish wedding may be astonished at the enormous amount of food that is provided. The bride's father is unrepentant and has the waistline to prove it.

Dunblane: Remembering Our Children

ITV, 9.00pm (*Granada*, Thursday 8.00pm)

The first anniversary of the Dunblane tragedy is marked by a documentary comprising the thoughts of the bereaved parents, presented without commentary. It is a far less distressing film than you might expect, not because anybody tries to minimise their loss, but because the emphasis is on the positive. The paradox is that unspeakable evil has helped to uncover uncommon goodness. One aspect of this is the extraordinary number of cards and messages of sympathy from all over the world. Another is the way the bereaved parents have bonded together through their weekly meetings, not to wallow in past horror but to find strength in the future. Even showing video footage of the murdered children, poignant as it is, is an occasion for the celebration of a life rather than the mourning of death.

Peter Waymark

9.00am *Modern Times: Jewish Wedding*

Film following the fortunes of a couple planning a full Jewish wedding (7) (90831)

9.50 *A Woman Called Smith*: The Two Jeans: A profile of two fun-loving, dancing grandmothers from Essex (7) (82183)

10.00 *Even Further Aboard* with Jonathan Meades (7) (83096)

10.30 *Newsnight* (7) (370589)

11.15 *This Life* (7) (605947) 11.35 *Weather* (13592)

12.00 *The Midnight Hour* (28139)

12.30am *Zone Open: University* — *Rocky Shores* (61110) 1.00 *Tropical Forest* (68874) 1.30 *Managing for Blovability* (54333) 2.00 *Nightshift TV: The Geography Collection* (18485) 4.00 *BBC Focus: English Heritage* (27690) 4.30 *Unicef in the Classroom* (63139) 5.00 *Health and Safety at Work* (52771) 5.30 *Voluntary Matters* (28968)

5.30pm *Here comes the bride* (8pm)

5.45pm *Modern Times: Jewish Wedding*

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5.



RUGBY LEAGUE 45

Myler committed to keeping the game on right track

SPORT

WEDNESDAY MARCH 12 1997

SAILING 45

James Capstick finds the Southern Ocean an unforgiving place



Grayson expected to be fit

Healey takes up England's pole position

By DAVID HANDS, RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

AUSTIN HEALEY, the spark who has helped to set Leicester's season alight, will win his first full England cap on Saturday when he plays scrum half against Wales on the final weekend of the five nations' championship in the match that will decide whether England can take at least a triple crown from a season of much promise.

Healey, 23 and capped as a replacement against Ireland last month, changes places with Andy Gomersall, the Wasp who has struggled to sustain the bright start that he made to his international career against Italy in November. That he does so at such a late hour adds piquancy to an already rich occasion, since Healey has every prospect of joining Robert Howley, whom he will oppose, on the British Lions tour to South Africa in the summer.

Not only that, it is Howley whose technique Healey has studied this season on video in order to make himself a better all-round player. Bob Dwyer, the Leicester director of rugby, suggested that Howley's support play was worthy of dissection and on Saturday he will see how a discerning public that he is a better player than he appeared that day.

Since the match is in Cardiff, Healey will also enjoy the opportunity to exercise some ghosts. In January he played in the Leicester team put to the sword by Brive in the Heineken Cup final; he will seek to show a discerning public that he is a better player than he appeared that day.

Healey's elevation is the only change made to the XV beaten 23-20 by France, which, given the gloomy prognostications surrounding Paul Grayson earlier in the week, is surprising. The England medical team have given Grayson an optimistic report; he did only light stretching at



FIVE NATIONS CHAMPIONSHIP

Bisham Abbey yesterday and must indicate full fitness tomorrow; all being well, however, he will partner Healey, who has come from the back of the pack this season.

After he moved from Orrell to Leicester, various leading coaches suggested that Healey needed to develop his half-back skills if he was to move up the ladder, but nobody could criticise his outstanding pace, his cover defence and his utter self-confidence.

Where, he was asked, does his confidence come from?

"My ability," he said simply, which will receive a severe examination against Howley.

He has moved from fourth in the pecking order to first after Matthew Dawson was overlooked — and later injured — Kyran Bracken demoted to England A and Gomersall given a chance, only to be edged aside after five caps. "Healey has been pressing very hard and this is the game in which to give him

his opportunity," Jack Rowell, the England coach, said.

Healey spent two seasons as a wing with Watford before moving to Orrell to replace Devil Morris. "To come from the back was a surprise, but it gives you that little extra drive," he said. "Criticism of your game gives you something to work on, to become a better player, but, whenever I walk on to the pitch, I think as a rugby player, not just as a scrum half. Rugby is about reading the game, about getting to the right place at the right time."

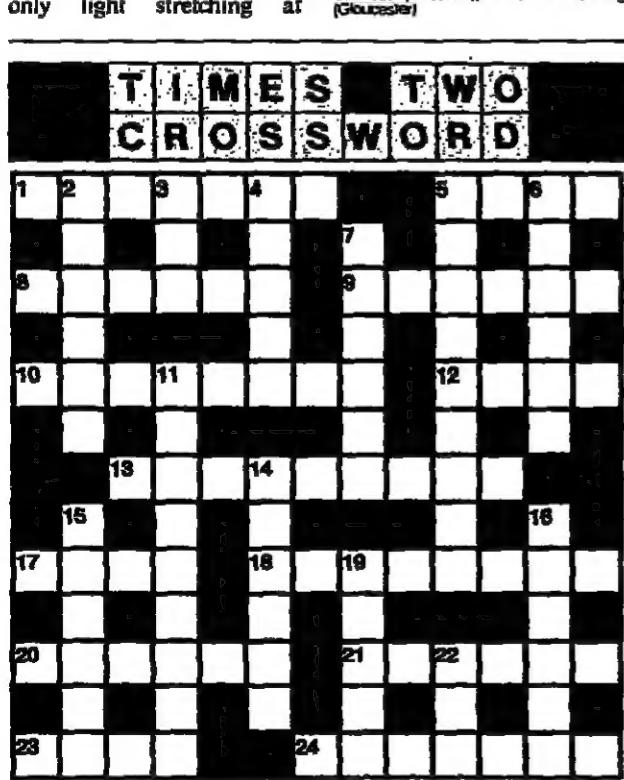
Healey is arriving at the right place at much the same time as Will Carling is likely to leave it. Rumours have abounded that this will be Carling's final England appearance, though he is closing no doors. "That is the way I am inclined at the moment, but I won't make any definite decision until I have thought long and hard about it during the summer," Carling said.

He fully intends to complete his two-year contract with Harlequins, but, at 31, has reached the stage where domestic and business interests demand more time, which international rugby does not allow. "I don't think my enthusiasm has diminished, but you allow me to the stage where there are other things to do," he said.

Wales look certain to give Jonathan Davies a final trial at stand-off when their team is named tomorrow. Neil Jenkins will remain at full back with Kingsley Jones, the Ebbs Vale flanker, standing by should Colin Charvis withdraw. Charvis (groin), Ieuan Evans (calf and hamstring), Scott Gibbs (neck) and Scott Quinnell (leg) missed training yesterday, but David Young and Christian Loader, the props, were able to complete the session.

Alain Penuaud, the Brive stand-off, has withdrawn from the France squad to play Scotland in Paris after collecting a groin injury against Narbonne at the weekend.

Irish plans, page 44



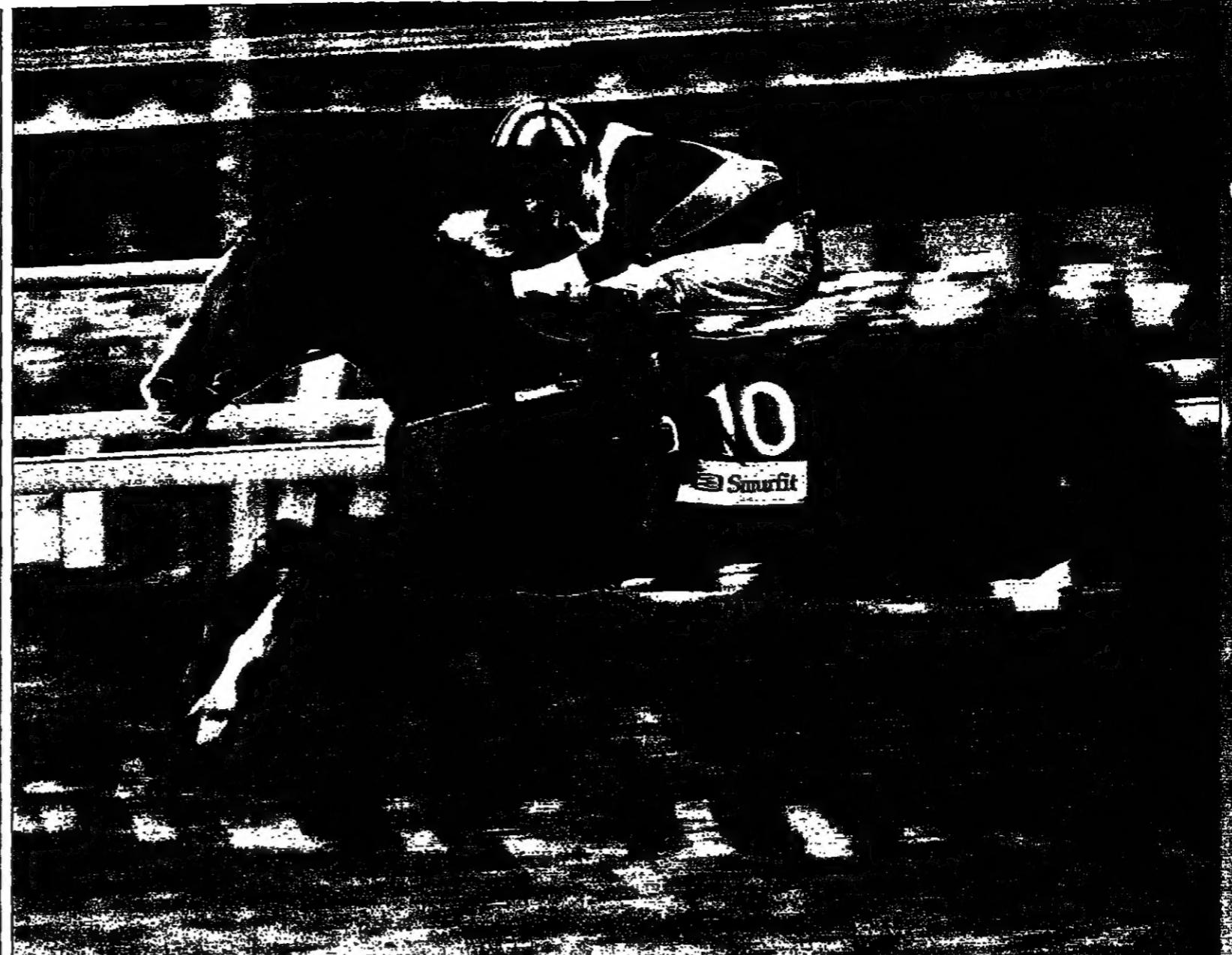
No 1039

ACROSS
1 Record; subdue (3,4)
5 Members of scrum (4)
8 Chief conspirator (*J. Caesar*) (6)
9 Place of bliss (6)
10 Aggressive masculinity (9)
12 Sort of butt chair, cube (4)
13 Church elder (9)
17 Cheap clearance (4)
18 London station; crushing defeat (8)
20 Forswear (6)
21 Forearm-flexing muscle (6)

SOLUTION TO NO 1038
ACROSS: 1 Evergreens 8 Elegiac 11 Sephardi 13 Dogma 14 Run in 21 Pompeii 22 Bluebottle
DOWN: 1 Event 2 Evening dress 6 Intransigent 7 Option 12 Parallel 18 Exile 19 Azimmo

SOLUTION TO TIMES TWO CROSSWORD 1034
In association with BRITISH MIDLAND

ACROSS: 1 Duke 3 Flashman 8 Molére 10 Refic 11 Sixth-former 13 Insat 15 Atala 17 Householder 20 Herod 21 Suspend 22 Progress 23 Slur
DOWN: 1 Domestic 2 Phlox 4 Lie low 5 Scrutinies 6 Malaria 7 Neck 9 Echo sounder 12 Intruder 14 Scherzo 16 Versus 17 Dwell 19 Chop
1st PRIZE of a return ticket travelling economy class to anywhere on BRITISH MIDLAND's domestic or international network is R. Bickerston, Cumnor, Oxford.
2nd PRIZE of a return ticket to anywhere on BRITISH MIDLAND's domestic network is J. Soper, London NW1.
All flights subject to availability.



Make A Stand and McCoy storm over the last on their way to a memorable front-running triumph in the Champion Hurdle yesterday

Pipes fulfil their driving ambitions

By RICHARD EVANS
RACING CORRESPONDENT

MARTIN PIPE sent out the winners of the Smurfit Cheltenham Hurdle and Guinness Arkle Trophy at Cheltenham yesterday but was left counting the cost — thanks to a rash promise by his wife, Carol, to

father, explained. "I got the catalogue out after he won and it cost £45,000 so she said 'no', but promised me the car if Make A Stand won the Champion Hurdle."

Marin Pipe confirmed: "My wife said David could have the car ... I think I have lost my trainer's share of the prize-money I've won today."

Pipe earned £17,637.25 for his training fee yesterday, and will be relieved that he still owns 50 per cent of the horse, for which he won a further £62,069. Despite a stunning day which began by sending out Nordic Breeze, a 100-1 shot, to finish third in the opening Citroen Supreme Novices' Hurdle, and was crowned by the victories of Make A Stand and Or Royal in the Arkle, he ended the day with just a modest profit.

"I saw this fantastic car in the car park at Newbury racecourse before Make A Stand ran in the Tote Gold Trophy and my mother said I could have one if we won the race," David, assistant to his

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father, explained. "I got the catalogue out after he won and it cost £45,000 so she said 'no', but promised me the car if Make A Stand won the Champion Hurdle."

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